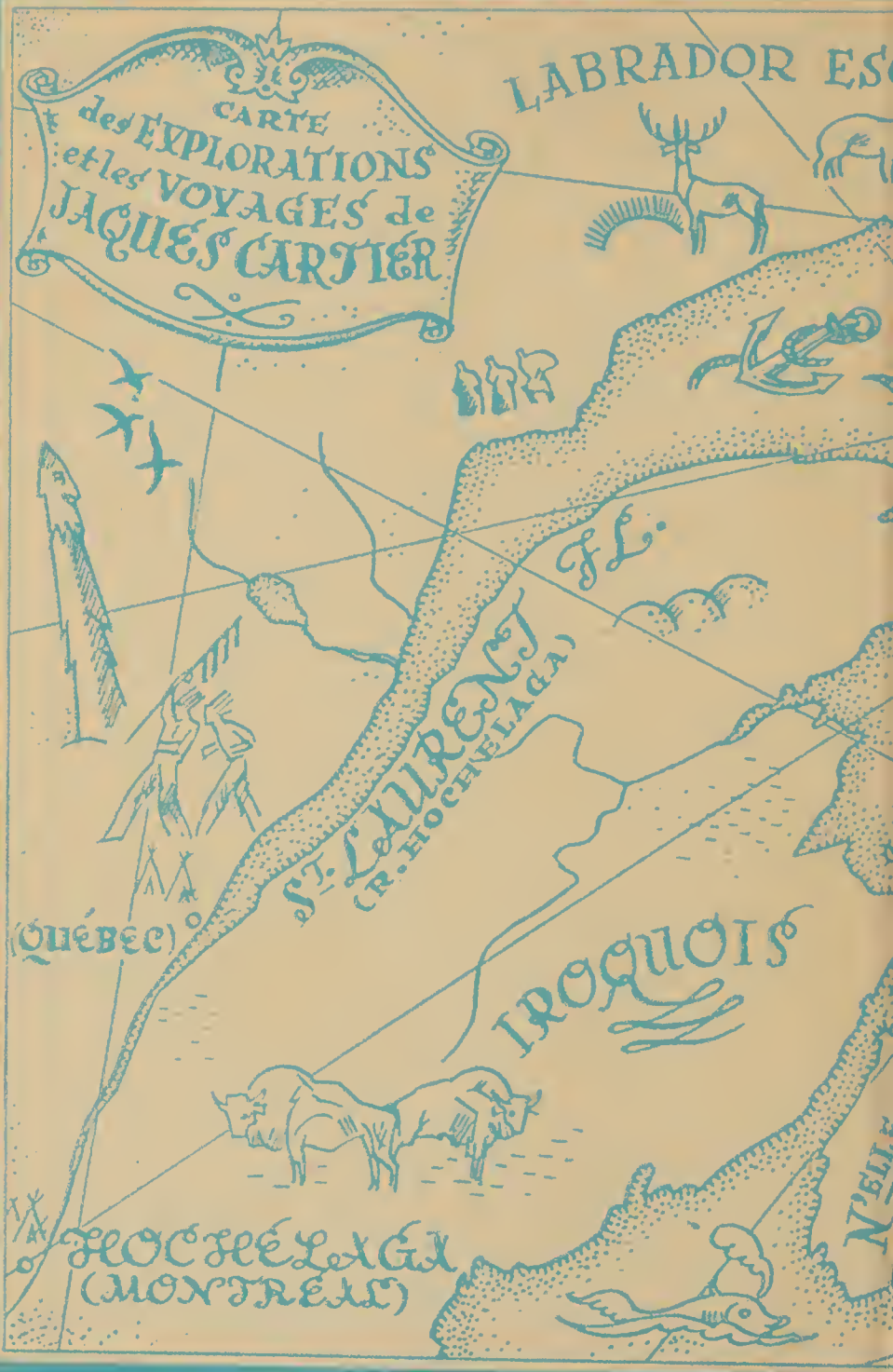
THE SHORES OF ADVENTURE

BY

EVERETT McNEIL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—ANGELO PATRI.

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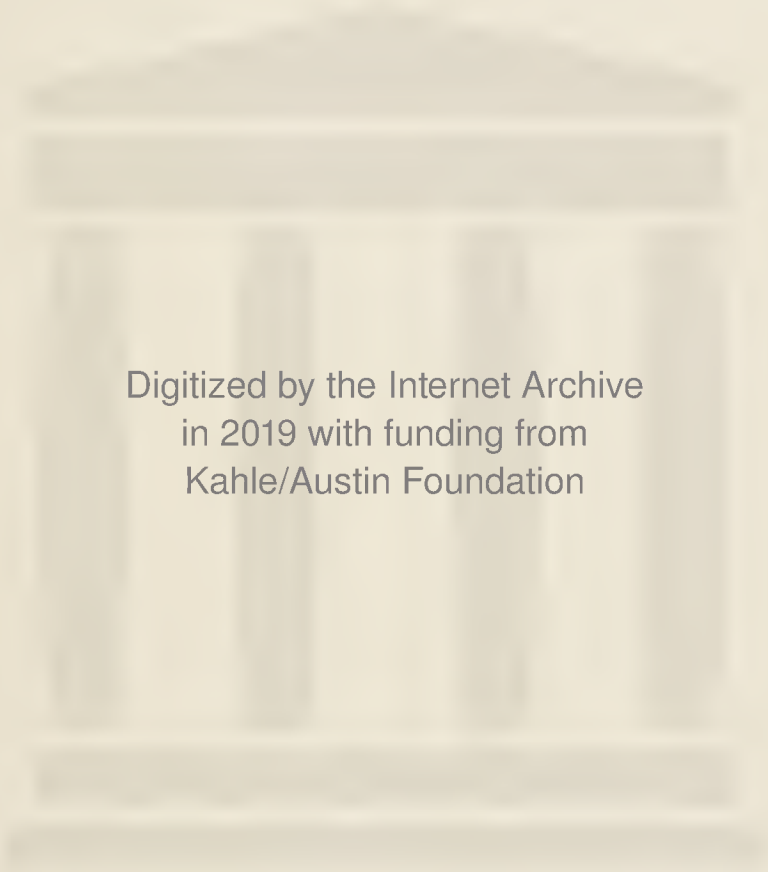
THE SHORES *of* ADVENTURE



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THE SHORES OF ADVENTURE

OR

Exploring in the New World with Jacques Cartier

Wherein I Tell How I Came to Sail with Captain Cartier on the Voyage to America, in Which He Discovered That Great and Unknown River, Which the Savages Called Hochelaga, (St. Lawrence); Together with an Account of the Marvelous Manner in Which the Casket of Quetzalcoatl Came into My Possession and of the Evil Happenings That Mysteriously Followed Its Coming and of the Swift and Dreadful Punishment That, in the End, Overwhelmed the Evil Three

As Set Down in English

By EVERETT McNEIL

8063

NEW YORK

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First Edition

Free
Rutland, Mass.

DEDICATION

To All Who Love A Story of Gallant
Exploring and Brave Adventuring

190555

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THE SHORES OF ADVENTURE

OR

Exploring in the New World With Jacques Cartier

The Shores of Adventure

CHAPTER I

THE DE VALOUR SWORD

"SON, I am no longer your master with the sword," my father said. "Rather you have mastered me, as but now you proved when your blade, like a thing with a hand, gripped mine and flung it from me, despite the utmost I could do," and, with a kindly smile, he bent and picked up his sword from the floor, where a quick thrust and twist of my wrist had sent it, and slipped it back into its scabbard.

"But, father, that was but a shrewd trick, taught me by the best sword master in Paris, during the visit there from which I have but just now returned. I'll show you how 'tis done. You can master it in an hour's time. 'Tis thus——"

"'Sdeath! Think you I know not, when I feel skill greater than my own playing with the point of my blade? Truly, there be but few men in France who could have done that to me—and France is the sworder's school of the world! But it galls me not, this defeat, albeit it is by one but little more than a boy, since that boy be my own son. Rather, it puts pride and a great gladsomeness into my heart, that I have a son so skilled with the sword, that glorious weapon of a gentleman, which defends alike his honor and his manhood, which

waits in its scabbard ever ready to leap forth at the call of maid or woman in distress or when wrongs are to be righted. Always remember, son, that the sword is a noble weapon; and, therefore, let not thy hand demean it by any ignoble deed. Yuon, you have the born swordsman's quick eye and brain, the wrist of steel, the long arm and the subtle swiftness and certainty of muscles. Now, added to these natural gifts, you have the skill. I am proud of you. I salute you," and the right hand of my tall and courtly father went across his breast and rested over his heart, as he bent and made me that graceful and ceremonious bow, with which he was wont to greet a superior, albeit, with a merry twinkle in his two eyes.

"Nay, I be not the master of one of the best swordsmen of France," I replied. "There is a new twist of the wrist in that trick, known to but few as yet, which M. Herué, master swordsman of Paris, taught me. 'Tis said that none who know not this twist, can stay or conquer the grip of a blade in the hand of one who hath its mastery. Let me show you how 'tis done! You——"

"Nay, nay, Yuon," broke in my father hastily. "Tomorrow, when we have our sword-play, you can show me, for I am most anxious to learn this shrewd sword-trick of yours. But now I have other matters to attend." He paused and his kindly eyes rested with unwonted soberness on my face.

"Yes, Father," and I slipped the blade, which I had held unsheathed in my hand, back into its scabbard and awaited his further words, for the look in his eyes told me that he had something of unusual import to say.

"Yuon," he continued, that look of anxious solicitude still in his eyes, "the thought has come to me somewhat

suddenly that you are now no longer a boy in size and in actions, albeit but little more than eighteen years old. I saw this for the first time to-day, when I contended with you at sword-play; and a great wonder and surprise came into me at the thought that my boy is boy no longer. How like a bird on the wing have the years flown by! But yesterday, or so it seems to me, I held you in my—Aye, lad, dost still remember that day when we walked in the Red Forest and two great hunger-gaunt wolves leaped at you from behind a clump of bushes, as you ran prattling by my side? Dost remember how I caught you up and swung you on my left arm and with my sword fought the two hunger-mad wolves and slew them both? And how, as I fought, you sat laughing on my arm and had no fear. There was glory in that moment for me; for I knew then that my man child had been born with a brave heart. Aye, Yuon, 'twas with this very sword that I killed those two wolves! You——"

He stopped abruptly and his hand went to the hilt of his sword, the sword that had been his father's sword, that had been handed down from father to the first-born son for I know not how many generations, that had been envied and admired by every swordsman who had held it in his hand, that I had long dreamed of possessing, as one dreams of possessing something most rare and wonderful, my father's sword! The De Valour Sword!

"As you know, Yuon," he began again, after a moment's thoughtful pause, as he started slowly drawing the sword from its scabbard, "I hold this sword but in trust, as did my father before me, as did those fathers of ours who came before him, to give in like trust to my first-born son, when I can see age peering at me from beyond the top of the hill and my son has grown lusty

in manhood and strong in courage and honor. In our family, Yuon, the handing down of this sword is like an accolade of a king, a thing to be greatly cherished and an honor to be highly prized. Now it becomes my pleasant privilege to pass this sword on to you; for I can feel age creeping into my bones and you have grown into the lustihood of a man, despite your age, and I know you honorable. Down on your knees, Yuon de Valour!" His tall form came up straight and stiff on his feet as the blade of his sword leaped out of its scabbard and went up straight in front of him.

I dropped to my knees before my father, somewhat awed by the dignity of his mien, for the Chevalier de Valour, my father, had a most high and stately presence in the doing of a goodly deed or when a noble thought stirred his soul.

"Yuon de Valour, first-born son of mine," and he lowered his eyes to my upturned face, "this sword has been handed down from father to first-born son for many generations in our family. Now I, in turn, pass it on to you, to hold likewise in trust, God willing! until your time comes to give it in like trust to your first-born son. Never in all those years has it come into an unworthy hand; never has its blade been stained, save at the behest of justice and right, or the honor of man, or in aid of defenseless maid or woman. Bow your head, Yuon de Valour."

I bowed my head, a pleasant awe and a feeling of deep solemnity coming into me; for I had been bred to look upon this sword of my father as a sacred thing, as a symbol of all that was best and most glorious in our ancient and honorable family. I had dreamt dreams of the time, when the great privilege of possessing and of holding it in trust for my first-born son would be

passed on to me. I still had the youth to feel both the glory and the honor, which were now about to be conferred on me.

"Yuon, first-born son of mine," continued my father, "before I pass this sword on to you, I am in duty bound to demand that you swear a solemn oath, with your lips pressed to this sacred crucifix, blessed and given to an ancestor of ours by the Most Holy St. Martin himself and which I now take from my neck and hang about your neck. Always this sword and this crucifix go together."

My father paused; and, a moment later, I felt a chain drop over my bowed head and saw him place a small crucifix into my two hands and then lift the crucifix and my hands up reverently to my lips; and I vow, as I felt that holy crucifix touch my lips, a sweet fervor and a great cleansing swept through me, as if my very soul had been washed clean with holy water.

"Now, I give you the oath," and my father straightened up. "Repeat it carefully after me and, so long as you live, break it not: In the name of God, Amen! I, Yuon de Valour, first-born son of the Chevalier, Lauren de Valour, do solemnly swear, before God and Holy Church, that I will hold this sword in sacred trust to be passed on to my first-born son, when the time comes, with blade untarnished, as it is now, by any ignoble act of my hand; that I will hold it ever ready to leap from its scabbard at the call of maid or woman in distress, or in defense of the honor of King and Country, or my own manhood, or the honor of my family, or of any man. All this I most solemnly swear to do on my honor as a gentleman of France and on the honor of that chivalrous and most ancient and most honorable family of whom I am one, the Chevaliers de Valour. God rest

their souls! In token that I speak true words, I do now kiss this most holy crucifix, blessed by St. Martin. Amen!" And he touched me lightly on the top of the head with the flat of the sword blade.

Slowly and solemnly I repeated this oath, word for word, as my father spake them; and, when I had come to its end, I reverently pressed the crucifix to my lips and kissed it.

"Son, my son, stand up!" cried my father, his face shining, the moment this ceremony was ended. "The sword is now yours, to have and to hold, until the time comes for you to pass it on to your own first-born son." He caught me by my two shoulders, raised me to my feet and pressed a kiss on each cheek. Afterwards I felt the water of two tears moist on my cheeks. "Wear the sword proudly and ever as it befits a De Valour." With his own hands, he buckled the sword-belt around me and thrust the shining blade down into its scabbard, then, stepping back a pace, he made me once more that grand ceremonious bow of his.

I snapped the sword out sharply from its scabbard and saluted him, as I had seen officers in Paris salute their superiors.

"Now, I go about that business I spoke of, son. Forget not that you are to teach me your new sword-trick to-morrow at our sword-play," and with a nod and a smile he hurried away. A stately courtly figure of a man I thought him, as I watched him go, and one of the most honorable gentlemen in France.

But, alas! there was to be no sword-play on the morrow. The good God, or, mayhap, the evil devil, had other plans, most unexpected and startling plans, that hurried me from home, from father, even from France and thrust me into a series of more surprising and ex-

traordinary adventures than I am sure ever before befell man or boy. I marvelled then at the strange suddenness of the happenings that brought this about. I marvel still; and I know not even yet whether to thank God or to blame the devil for the fate that forced me thus suddenly into the very midst of the most extraordinary adventures that ever gladdened the heart of a youth or brought sorrow to the heart of a son and father. On the whole, I think that I thank God; for it gave me a part in one of the greatest adventures of the age and made me acquainted with that most remarkable man, Captain Jacques Cartier, whose fame has now far overswept the grim old walls of St. Malo, his native town, and, mayhap, will even outlast their solid stone masonry.

Thus it is that sometimes the tenor of a whole life is changed, as it were, in the twinkling of an eye—but I must get on to the telling of how these strange happenings came about.

CHAPTER II

I FIND GOLIATH WHITTLING ARROWS—AND SEE CAPTAIN JACQUES CARTIER

AS you may well believe, when my father went from me, he left behind him a boy with a heart swelling with noble thoughts and high resolves; and, I fear me, with a certain pridefulness, not so noble, but quite as natural in a youth who had just had high praise from the one whose praise he valued most and had just received the thing he desired to possess above all other things. Truly the words of my father and the passing on to me of the famous De Valour Sword were honors great enow to somewhat turn the head of any youth.

The moment my father had passed from my sight, my hand and my thoughts went to my sword and I drew its blade from its scabbard and fingered lovingly its bright steel. Well I knew there was not a better tempered blade in France; for I had often seen my father, when exhibiting it to his swordsmen friends, put it through the sword-maker's crucial tests—strike a violent blow on a solid block of oak with each of its two flat sides, with its edge, with its back, bend it flatwise in both directions until it nearly formed the half of a circle and, finally, with a quick, powerful thrust, drive its point through a steel plate an eighth of an inch thick. There were few sword blades that could endure all these crucial tests and still leave the steel as straight and true as when it first came from the hand of its maker and the De Valour sword was one of them.

Now, as I fingered the blade, I thought of these things; and also I thought of that long line of brave and noble De Valour men, who had worn this sword by their sides before me, without dishonor to it; and again I resolved that there should be no dimming of its sheen of honor through any act of my hands. But, what a youth has, that he would show, if it be something in which he takes pride; and so, after I had spent a few minutes fingering the blade, to the delight of my heart, I slipped it back into its scabbard, tightened and shifted the belt to the right angle about me, placed my hat of black velvet jauntily on my head, and tossed my scarlet-lined small cloak over my shoulders. Then, with what I thought something of the swagger of the court gallants I had seen in Paris, I sauntered out on the streets of St. Malo, to let others see that I was now a man who wore a sword, aye, more, that I wore the famous De Valour Sword.

The morning was still young and balmy with the air of May, which had the feel on my face of cool-scented water in which it would be a sweet delight to bathe the whole body. Many folk crowded the narrow cobblestone-paved streets, with a great jostling of shoulders against shoulders and dodging of carts and donkeys and loads of produce, which had come from outside the walls for the day's trafficking. The cries of men, women and children made a pleasant turmoil in my ears. Bright colors fluttered in the air from heads and necks and bodies of the women folk, who, as all French women do, loved to decorate themselves with the colors a loving God has given to the flowers. Black eyes flashed and smiling lips turned in my direction, as I moved through this busy throng; and I gallantly gave back smile for smile and look for look and bowed my head slowly and even

winked an eye, when a maid looked in a sweetly roguish manner at me, yet I tried not to appear overbold to any. At that moment I think I was about as pleased and as self-satisfied a youth as there was in all France.

Suddenly, as I thus sauntered happily along the crowded streets of St. Malo, the words of a man at my side caused me to stop abruptly, halted by surprise and consternation. My heart gave a great jump and the busy streets and the bright-eyed maids, even my sword and braveries, were forgotten and my eyes went quickly to the ramparts overlooking the port, where I knew the three ships of our great sea captain, Jacques Cartier, lay anchored. How could I have forgotten that this was the day he expected to set sail on his Second Voyage to that wondrous New World, recently discovered beyond the Western Seas! For days these three ships had fed my imagination, as I watched them being made ready for the long voyage. What mysteries! what marvels! what monstrous savage men and beasts! what treasures of gold and precious stones might not this voyage reveal to a wondering world! How I longed to go with Captain Cartier on that voyage! But, "no," my father had said. And this very day would be the last day I could look on these ships, glamourous with the unknown into which they were about to sail—and, mayhap, vanish forever. In truth, the ships might hoist sail at any moment and I be not there to see them! At that thought I broke into a run, forgetting in my eagerness to get to the ramparts, all thought of the dignity befitting my new manhood.

When I came to the top of the ramparts, I found them already crowded with the folk of St. Malo, all anxious to see their bold Captain Cartier and his men start on their long voyage to the New World; but I

managed to force a place for my eyes. The three ships were still there. I could see men moving about on their decks, making all things ready for an instant start the moment a favoring wind struck their sails. The waters around the ships were nearly filled with small boats, crowded with folk eager to come as near to the ships as possible. The sounds of a great excitement were in the air and the bustle of this excitement filled all eyes.

At my second glance downward toward the ships, I uttered a little cry of pleased surprise. Surely I knew that huge, big-shouldered, long-armed man sitting on a great coil of rope on the pier by the side of Captain Cartier's own big ship, knew that long black beard, braided into three thick strands, tied with bits of string, knew that great mop of bushy black hair, falling about his bare head. It was Goliath, the bowman, so called from his huge size and great strength and wondrous skill with his bow, with whom I had spent many delightful hours listening to his marvelous tales of the sea and especially to the stories he told of that First Voyage of Captain Cartier to the New World, for he had been with our bold captain on that voyage.

"Now, if he will but let me sit beside him on that coil of rope," I thought, "I'll have the best place in St. Malo to watch the going of Captain Cartier," and, slipping my head from out my embrasure in the wall of people, I made haste down to the shore and to the pier.

The shore, if possible, was even thicker with folk than were the ramparts, but by using my elbows and a haughty fierce look, I broke through the ranks facing the pier. Two stout men barred the entrance to me with the sharp points of their spears.

"What, ho! Goliath!" I shouted. "Wouldst bar thy good friend, Yuon, from thy side?"

The giant looked up from the long arrow he was fashioning with his sharp knife and, brushing the hair back from his eyes with a huge hand, stared at me for an instant.

"Body of St. Peter, so it do be you, Yuon!" he called back. "Let him come!" he ordered and the two spears were quickly lifted and I passed under them.

Goliath gave me warm welcome; for it had been a long two months since I had given him the opportunity to tell his wondrous sea tales to me and most dearly he loved his yarning.

"Sit you down, Yuon, sit you down," he bade me. "It has been long weeks since I saw you. Where—" he stopped abruptly, his eyes staring at my sword. "What, ho! 'tis a boy you be no longer, but a man with a sword! By my black beard, 'tis the De Valour Sword!" and he came up quickly on his feet and made me the grand courtesy the humble make to the noble, albeit I saw a merry twinkle in the eyes that looked out at me from the midst of the black hair and beard.

"Now," he continued at the end of the courtesy, "having done my devoir, as Goliath, the bowman, should to the son of the Chevalier de Valour, let us sit ourselves down on this coil of good rope, whilst you tell me of the happenings that kept your ears from hearing certain most truthful and remarkable adventures I had in mind narrating to you," and, thrusting his great bow and sheaf of arrows, without which I had never seen him, a little to one side to make room for us on the coil of rope, he motioned me to sit down and then took his seat by my side. "Now, give me the tale; for it has been a long two months since I saw you," and his eyes went to my face.

"I have been to Paris to put the finishing touches on

my swordsmanship," I began; "and now that I am back, I——"

But here I broke off abruptly, for a sudden commotion on the pier-side of Captain Cartier's big ship, caused our eyes to go quickly thitherward, where we saw a number of men gathering around one man, who seemed about to come over the shipside and down on the pier.

" 'Tis Captain Cartier himself!" exclaimed Goliath and quickly came to his feet; and I could but note the liking and deep respect in the tone of his voice and in his manner.

"In truth, it is he!" and I was quickly on my feet by his side; for I well knew Captain Cartier, as what man, woman or child in St. Malo did not know the bronzed, masterful face of the man who had brought so great honor, aye and glory, to our seaport town? We were all proud of him; and no town in all Europe could better judge the qualities of a seaman than could this town of St. Malo, famed wherever ships sailed salt water for its bold, adventurous and skillful seamen. My father knew Captain Cartier personally and had great admiration and respect for him as a brave and chivalrous gentleman and as one of the ablest seamen in France. Once, and not many days after his return to France from his First Voyage to the New World, he had even visited us and had ate at our table; and I had sat fascinated and motionless, with eyes that I know were big and round with wonder and admiration and with a great stirring of the blood of adventure inside of me, as I listened to the tales he told of that voyage. He had even taken note of me, had looked at me sharply and had asked: "Wouldst go adventuring with me, when I sail again to the New World?"

And I, unmindful of my dignity in my excitement,

had jumped to my feet and, turning to my father, with eyes I could feel were aflame with desire and cheeks red with the blood surging through them, had panted almost breathlessly: "Oh, can—can I go, Father?" and then I had dropped back quickly on my chair, fearful that I had been overbold and had misbehaved myself.

But my father and Captain Cartier had only laughed heartily; and Captain Cartier had reached forth a hand and placed it on my shoulder and had looked at me with a new interest in his eyes and then had said, smiling sympathetically as he spoke: "It might be that you will, lad. God alone knows the future."

"No, no," spoke up my father hastily, and his face had instantly sobered. "Put not such thoughts into the lad's head, Captain Cartier; for his sister and I have sore need of him here with us. These be troublesome times for the De Valours and—" he broke off abruptly with a short laugh and then continued: "No, Captain Cartier, I could not spare Yuon, my first-born son," and I saw his two lips come together in a manner I had come to know as disposing of a matter irrevocably. "But, were it possible, there is no gentleman nor seaman in all France with whom I would trust him sooner, than I would with you, Captain Cartier," and he bowed to the famous seaman.

But the talk and the tales I had then listened to, from the very lips of Captain Cartier himself, had fired my young blood with a lust for adventuring and exploring in that strange, far-off New World, where any marvel might happen and where great honor and glory might be acquired; and some day I vowed in my heart that I, too, would go thither exploring and adventuring.

Also it had vexed me not a little, as to what my father had meant, when he spoke of "troublesome times for the

De Valours." I knew of no threatening trouble, no cause of worriment; and yet, when I came to think about it, I remembered that, since I had come back from Paris, I had often seen a cloud come on my father's brow and a vexed look come into his eyes, when he thought himself unobserved, but always it had passed in a moment. I had not questioned my father; for he was a man one did not question about his own affairs.

Truly I knew Captain Cartier and truly I thought him a great hero, the greatest then living in France; and I am sure that the eyes I now fixed on him had in them all the adoration and worshipfulness that is ever in the heart of a youth for the noble and the heroic.

For a minute Captain Cartier paused in front of a rope ladder hanging down from the deck of the ship to the pier below. Then he very nimbly came down the ladder and stood on the pier awaiting the coming down of two officers who were to accompany him ashore. I thought he looked most stately and grand, as he stood there, dressed in his captain's uniform and standing very stiff and straight; and something like awe of his greatness came within me, as I watched him walk, an officer at either elbow, toward Goliath and me.

I wondered if he would recognize me. If he should— I trembled at the thought. But, no, that were too much to expect! Nathless, I still stood trembling, my eyes fixed on his approaching face. When he came opposite us, he paused. My heart gave a great jump! But he had paused only to return the salute of Goliath and to speak a greeting to him. He did not appear to note me at all —Then my heart thumped again! His eyes had turned to my face, had lighted with recognition and surprise.

"Ah, Yuon, first-born son of the Chevalier de Valour, it gladdens me to see you here. Has your good father

repented him of his hardness of heart? Art coming with us? 'Twill be a great adventure, lad! But, I am in haste now," and he moved on, before my startled wits could form aught but stammering words; but I knew he could see the great desire in my eyes.

"He is the bravest man and the ablest seaman I ever served under," Goliath said, his eyes following the retreating form of his captain with something like worship in them. "He be going now to say his farewells to the town officials. Hark! There sounds the cannon of the fort in his honor!"

As he spoke there came a great thundering of cannon and the smoke shot out from the walls of the fort and then billowed upward, spreading out widely as it did so, in a manner very beautiful to see. At the same moment there burst forth from the mouths of the thousands gathered there, so great a shouting that my ears were near deafened with the sounds of it; and the ramparts, walls, house-tops, windows—every vantage point blossomed with a great waving of many-colored handkerchiefs, cloaks, scarfs—anything that came to the hands of a people doing homage to a great and heroic spirit. The sight and the sound fired my blood. I wanted to be in the midst of it; and I turned quickly to Goliath, who was now on his feet shouting with the loudest.

"Surely, it will now be some little time before Captain Cartier sails," I cried, thrusting my mouth upward toward the giant's ear as far as I could. "I would see what is happening in the town and, also, wish to go home and get me something to eat with which to stay my hunger while I wait here the sailing. Think you I shall have time, Goliath?"

"Aye, and to spare, lad; for our brave captain will not hoist sails until there comes a wind to fill them,

which is not apt to hap until the cool of the afternoon sends it. But, hurry you back, if you would see his going; for, comes the wind, he waits for no man, though it were the King himself. Go, lad. 'Twill be a goodly sight, this Godspeed of the people of St. Malo to our great captain. If I were not tied here, I would I could go with you," and his eyes went longingly to the great throng of shouting waving folk.

I waited no longer; but, calling to him that I would surely be back before the return of Captain Cartier, I gave a shout, to add my mite to the vast noise, and sped down the pier and plunged into the crowd. In a moment more it had swallowed me up.

It did not take me long to discover that I could make but little bodyway through the struggling mass of human beings that choked the streets, that it would be folly for me even to attempt to get within seeing, let alone hearing, distance of Captain Cartier; and then the thought came that it would be wiser for me to hurry home, get what food I needed, not forgetting a goodly portion for Goliath, and hurry back to my vantage-point on the pier and there await the return of Captain Cartier.

CHAPTER III

A VILLAIN, A MAID AND A FIGHT

THE De Valour home lay at some distance from the wharves of St. Malo, on the flattened brow of a small hill, with a rough and but little-frequented road running up to it. Along a short part of this road grew a wood, thick with underbrush and huge rocks. The way through this wood twisted and turned, as if it were following the trail of some gigantic snake, until it came to the broad and pleasant opening on the hilltop, where my ancestors, generations agone, had built the sturdy walls and towers of the De Valour castle, still an imposing building, albeit somewhat in decay.

When I came to this road it lay before me completely deserted of all signs of human beings. Evidently the few who dwelt near it had gone to help give Captain Cartier a fitting Godspeed at the beginning of his glorious adventure. The road itself and the woods about me were silent, save for the songs of the birds in the trees. The distant shouts of the multitudes paying homage to their hero, Captain Cartier, came to my ears, muffled and softened, as I hurried along beneath the overhanging branches of the trees. I could but compare the quietude and peacefulness of this little stretch of wooded road with the noisy turmoil of the streets from which I had just come and think of what a pleasant and quiet dwelling-place the good God had given me for a home.

Suddenly, as thus thinking I hurried along, eager

to get me back to Goliath and the pier, a woman's fear-pitched voice startled me.

"Take your hands from off me," cried the voice. "Take them off this instant or I cry aloud for help! I——"

The words suddenly ended, as if choked in the throat. Then, as I sprang into a run, there came the sounds of a struggle a little way ahead of me and a quick muffled scream.

Here the road made an abrupt turning, and there, in a small opening by the roadside, where a flat rock made a pleasant seat under the branches of a great oak tree, I saw a maid struggling with a tall man, saw that the maid and the man were both young——

With a quick bound, my fist shot out and hit the man on the head and he, unprepared for so violent a blow, went rolling on the ground, clutching up handfuls of grass as he rolled. In a moment he was on his feet and facing me, his hand on the hilt of the sword at his side. For a second we stood staring each into the other's eyes, both somewhat startled; for I had recognized him and he had recognized me the instant our eyes met. The maid had dropped panting and white-faced on the rock, a hand over her heart. I saw, in a glance, that she had suffered no harm, save to her outraged girlhood. Then I turned to the young Count de Bochart; for, to my great astonishment, the young man who now confronted me was that noble, the only son of the most powerful noble in that part of France. Already Count de Bochart was much disliked for his bold domineering ways, his prideful arrogance and his heartless cruelties.

"Sir," I said, bowing, my hat in my hand, "it would seem that you have been rude to this maid, doubtless in a moment of prideful forgetfulness of what is due her,

as a lady, from you, as a knight sworn to protect and honor all womankind. I have the honor, Count de Bochart, and the pleasure to await your humble apology to the maid for your rudeness," and I looked the count straight in the eyes and laid my hand on the hilt of my sword, to signify that I stood ready to enforce my demand.

I thought my words most fitting and dignified and took pride to myself that they had so bold and chivalrous a sound; but, evidently, the count had no such thoughts of them, for, hardly were they out of my mouth, when he broke into a loud laugh.

"And so the young cock from the De Valour coop has learned to crow!" he said and laughed again, but I could see a red fire coming into his eyes. "But a cock must crow, when hens can hear; and a boy must boast, when a girl be near. Now," and his eyes flamed and he jerked his sword out of its scabbard and took a quick step toward me. "Now, by the bones of my fathers! I'll teach you what it means for a De Valour to strike a De Bochart, for a boy to come between a man and a maid! The maid? It be none of your business what I do with her. She be mine and I do with her what I will—Here, you!" and, with a quick leap, he caught the girl roughly by the arm; for, at his words, with a little cry of fright, she had jumped to her feet and was about to flee. "Now, sit you down there and stay there. I have more to say to you, when I am done with this young bully," and he forced her down on the rock so rudely that she uttered a cry of pain and——

I had him by the collar and, with a quick, violent jerk, aided by the leverage of a foot and leg behind his two feet and legs, I jerked him free from the girl and hurled him so violently to the ground that he struck

with a most pleasing thump and grunt. Then I leaped swiftly backward and drew my sword, well knowing that now I must fight.

He bounded up on his feet, almost the moment he struck the ground and the face he turned to me was hot with rage but he held his temper well under control.

"Now," he said quite calmly, "for that and sundry other things it will pleasure me greatly to kill you, boy or no boy. I give you while I count twenty to make your peace with God," and he thrust the point of his sword down into the ground in front of him and, fixing his eyes on my face, he began slowly and evenly to count off twenty on his fingers, like a child.

"I have no war with God and, therefore, need no making of peace with Him," I replied and my voice matched his in quietude; for it is a De Valour trait to grow in calmness as danger draws near. "But you, make you your peace with God! See you not that I hold a sword in my hand! the De Valour Sword!"

At this he paused in his count and laughed again, his eyes going scornfully up and down my body.

"Aye, I see," he said and again he laughed, "and right glad I am that 'tis the De Valour Sword, for now will it be mine—ten!" and slowly and deliberately he went on with his counting, keeping his eyes on my face.

I said no more but quietly awaited the end of his counting, my eyes going over his big body as I did so. He was a huge, great-shouldered fellow, mayhap six feet two inches tall, with a body to match and long arms and pillarlike legs and, I judged, from twenty-five to thirty years old. While I was but a boy of eighteen and but five feet eleven inches in height, with arms and legs long enow for my body. Truly it would seem as if all the chances of the coming fight were overwhelmingly

against me. But, as my eyes went appraisingly over that big body, I saw certain things in my favor. He was over fat, his face was a little bloated and his eyes a bit blood-shot with ill-living; while I had lived clean and the daily practise at sword-play with my father since I was a boy of ten had given me muscles and sinews like steel springs and a body without an ounce of useless flesh on it. But, above all else, I had had the training of my father, a born swordsman. I had seen him at sword-play with many famous swordsmen, but never had I seen him defeated by any. Besides, I had the De Valour imperturbability of temper. I had often heard my father say that "he who conquers his temper and holds it at even heat has already half won the battle in a sword-fight." Then I had the superb confidence, the fine resilient vitality of youth. So that, thinking of these things, the affair did not look altogether hopeless to me.

During the counting I had kept my eyes watchfully on the count's eyes—another precept of my sword-wise father.

At the count of eighteen, I saw a little point of light flash into each of the eyes of Count de Bochart, saw the muscles of his arms, legs and body tauten; and I knew that he was making ready to spring, hoping to take me unprepared and to slay me at the first thrust —a cowardly, unchivalrous thing to do and the thought of it determined me to pay him back with his own kind of a trick.

"Nineteen!" he called, his voice now tense; and he paused, with the word, to hurl at me triumphantly: "Boy, I see death riding on the point of my sword!— Twenty!"——

At the instant he sprang.

Now my father had taught me a trick with which to

meet just such an impetuous onset, a trick that few sword blades had the resiliency and strength to accomplish; but I knew the De Valour Sword! And, as he came, holding his sword ready for the fatal thrust, with all the weight and strength and momentum of his big body back of it, I shifted a foot a little, caught his blade with mine and, with a quick twist of my wrist, turned it aside—if his sword had had an ill-forged blade, it would have snapped off at the haft. Then, with another quick twist of my wrist, I freed my blade and thrust—almost he threw himself on its point!

I shivered as I felt that peculiar thrill that runs up a sword and into the arm that holds it, when the blade enters human flesh! The sword dropped from my hand! I knew that it had done its work. I heard the maid cry out, caught a glimpse of her fleeing, with hands held over her eyes and then a hand fell on my shoulder.

"Son, 'twas splendidly and chivalrously done!" spoke the voice of my father. "A deed that does honor both to your high courage and manhood and to the skill of your sword. But now that it be done, we must give quick thought to the consequences."

He bent over the count, who now lay unconscious, gave a quick examination of the wound, a look into the fixed eyes and came to his feet, his face white.

"Yuon, I fear me he is dead," he said, his voice tense with emotion; "and that means that you must flee France this instant. His powerful father will stir heaven and earth to——"

"But, father, the fight was most fair! I——"

"What matters the fairness, so be it you slew him?" broke in my father. "The De Bocharts be a cruel and bloody race, all powerful in this part of France, powerful even at the court of the King. What care they for

the fairness of the fight? Blood of theirs you have shed and blood of yours must pay for the shedding, if they can find you in France. Yuon, you must flee France, now, on the instant."

"But, father, where can I fly? How can I go?"

"I have friends in Spain. A boat leaves port for Spain this very night. I know the captain. I—" He paused abruptly. In the silence a great shout came up from the people in the town doing honor to Captain Cartier. His troubled face cleared. His form came up straightly on his feet, as it always did when he made a decision that meant much to him.

"Son, I have it!" he cried out. " 'Twill be hard to part with you; but you shall go with Captain Cartier to the New World. No one will think of searching the ship for you. No search for you can be made in that far New World. Once I did a great service for Captain Cartier. He has not forgotten. Now he will repay me that service by serving you. Quick! Get you on board his own ship. I will manage to have word with Captain Cartier before he goes on board, will try to get on board myself before he sails and bring you a few things needful for so long a voyage. Now, get you on board his own ship as quickly as your legs can take you, while the streets near the wharves are free from people. I——"

"But, Mignon, my sister!——"

"No, no! There is no time for good-bys. I will give her your adieus. Son, my first-born son!" and his arms went around me and I felt his tears and his kisses warm on my cheeks.—A moment thus, then he pushed me from him.

"Go, go! I will attend to this!" and his eyes went to where the count lay.

Without another word I turned me and sped swiftly

through the deserted streets to the pier, where Goliath, when he had heard my tale and knew my needs, got me quickly on board Captain Cartier's own big ship, the *Herminia.*

Under other circumstances, the thought of going on so glorious an adventure would have given me great joy; but I liked not the manner of this going, liked not the leaving of my father and sister thus. I feared great trouble and peril might come to them, when I could not be found; that the cruel and powerful De Bocharts would take revenge on my brave father and innocent sister, whom I loved most dearly. But I was sensible enow to see that I would make a bad matter worse, would but add to their troubles and perils, by staying. Then, too, I knew that my father was not without friends, influence, even at the court of the King himself. He had served his country and his King well in his younger days. Wherefore, as I thought of these things, my fears for him grew less—but—but, be he boy or man, the chords of affection, which bind one to home and dear ones are not to be lightly broken, especially in the midst of perils, not without a great ache and a great loneliness coming into the heart—and they came to me.

CHAPTER IV

I AM FORCED TO LEAVE HOME—AND GO ON A GLORIOUS ADVENTURE

WHEN Captain Cartier came on board it was mid-afternoon. He at once came to the small cabin, wherein Goliath had placed me. He told me that my father did not dare venture on board for fear that he might betray my presence there to the De Bocharts, who were in a monstrous rage, because a De Valour had dared to draw sword against a De Bochart and had sworn to kill me at sight.

"They now watch your father's every movement," he said, "hoping that he will betray your whereabouts to them."

"But—but did that one sword thrust actually kill him? I gave but one thrust," I asked, anxious to know if the young count were dead; for the killing of a man, however justly done, is not a pleasant thought to lie in a youth's mind.

"I know not, nor did your father know," he answered. "Your father sent word to the old count that his son was sorely wounded and where he lay. The old count came, roaring with rage, like the brute that he is, and bore him away. Somehow he has discovered—your father did not tell him—that it was your sword that wounded the young count; and he vows that it must have been foully done; for, he declares, that no youth of your age could have hurt his son, well-known for his skill with the sword, in a fair fight. Yuon, for your

father's sake, as well as your own, I am glad that the good God has made it possible for me to do you this service; and, while I regret the cause, it pleases me much that you are to be with me on this great adventure, one fraught with much meaning, mayhap, for our King and Country. You——"

He paused, listening intently, then jumped to the door.

"The wind, the wind has come!" he shouted joyously as a boy. "Now we are off! Stay you here until I send for you," he called back and rushed through the door and up on deck.

Now my ears were filled with a great shouting from the shore, a deafening tramping of many feet on the deck, a rattling of unfurling sails and the groans of the windlass uplifting the heavy anchor. Then came a roar of the cannon from the ramparts of St. Malo, followed almost instantly by the thunders of the guns on board our ship and on the two other ships, which were to sail with us on our adventurous voyage. A moment later I felt the ship begin to move, amid the sounds of a yet louder shouting from the shore and the roaring of more cannon; and I leaped to the one small window of my cabin. In very truth we were off, off on as glorious an adventure as ever gladdened the heart of a boy, had it not been for the sadness of the way of my going! That was the last sight I had of St. Malo, my home town, for many a month.

Mayhap, some three or four hours passed before Captain Cartier sent for me to come to him in his cabin. When I stepped on deck I found that a dark cloudy night had come down on the ship. I could not see a star, nor the glimmer of a shore-light, look in what direction I might, only the vast darkness that hovered over the sur-

rounding waters. All around me lay the black shadowy mystery of the ocean; and I heard a deep low moaning coming up from its bosom and a sound like the slapping of many small wet hands against the sides of the ship. I had never been on the ocean at night-time before and, perchance, because of that, I was over-sensitive to all its weird and solemn impressions. Be that as it may, truly I felt great awe, as I followed my conductor across the dimly lighted deck to the door of Captain Cartier's cabin.

When I entered the cabin, I found Captain Cartier standing, with his back to a small fireplace, wherein was no fire, his two hands clasped behind him, staring down at a large globe, whereon was shown a representation of the earth. So intent was he on his study of the globe, that, for a minute or more, he did not look up; and my eyes had time to examine his face and form in the cabin of his own ship, wherein I thought he looked both taller and broader than he had on shore or in my father's house. Still I would not call him an overlarge man; but he had a firm-set body, somewhat broad at the shoulders. His face had the look of a leader in it, strong and masterly, with a square chin and large jaws, hidden by a black and neatly trimmed beard. But it was his eyes that moved me most. They were black, a little large, with a great firmness and dauntlessness looking out of them, as if he had often looked on danger and had been unafraid. I could but think, as I looked at them there in his own cabin, that they were the eyes of a man to anchor to in times of stress and trouble.

Suddenly, the black eyes were lifted from the globe and fixed on me.

"Yuon," he said gravely, "I have left you alone somewhat long; but I had good reasons for so doing. One of

the young noblemen who accompany me on board this very ship is Louis du Val, a young kinsman of Count de Bochart. I am quite certain that he knows not of your fight with Count Robert, nor, as yet, of your presence on board my ship; but I thought it wise to take no chances and to keep you under cover, until there would be no way of getting a message ashore. Now that we are many leagues from the coast of France, you are safe and I have sent for you to have a talk with you concerning your future on board this ship—but, sit you down," and he pointed to a chair, standing near a broad table, which was fastened to the floor near the center of the room.

I sat down and Captain Cartier seated himself in a big chair in front of the table and turned his eyes to my face.

"Yuon," he said, "I would hear the story of your fight with young Count Robert from your own lips and make you certain that you tell it just as it happened," and his bearded lips came together across his teeth in a straight line and his black eyes looked into my eyes, as if they would make two windows out of them through which he could read my inmost thoughts.

Then I told him the tale of the fight and the things that had led up to it; and, at its ending, I asked if he thought I had done justly and honorably in thus coming to the defense of the maid and if, by so doing, I had brought no dishonoring stain on the bright sheen of the De Valour Sword.

"No, Yuon, no! You did as a chivalrous youth should do, when you drew sword in defense of a maid in distress. It would have shamed your manhood and the sword at your side had you done otherwise. I know well the young Count Robert and the old count, his

father; and I know little good and much evil of both. If it happened that you killed Count Robert, the world will be the better for a scoundrel less in it. Yuon," and he turned to me, his eyes kindling, "of a certainty, you must teach me that sword-trick and others! I marvel greatly at your skill. I could never master your father with the sword; and now he tells me that you are his own master, which I think a marvel in one so young. Of a surety, you must teach me your sword-tricks, all that I have the skill to master. You——"

He came up quickly on his feet, his eyes sparkling. "I have been troubled as to what I should do with you. Now I have it! I will make you Sword-Master of my ships. You shall teach your skill to my officers and the young noblemen who sail with me to the New World. Doubtless, you will find some among them worthy of your metal; for they be bold blades, ever ready to chance life in a brave adventure. If they were not, they would not be on board my ships. That matter is settled and bravely settled, sobeit you prove equal to your father's report of you; and I doubt not but what you will; for Count Robert himself was counted among the skilled swordsmen of France. I shall test the matter out to-morrow. Art willing, Yuon?"

"Aye," I answered. "But I fear you do my skill too much honor; yet I have the De Valour Sword and that gives me an advantage over all who come against me."

"To-morrow, then, I will make an appointment for the sword-play. Now, go you on deck and find Goliath, the bowman. I have given him in charge over you for the night, since I know you two to be friendly. I have great admiration for that mighty man of bone and brawn and most marvelous skill with the bow, and true loyalty. I would trust him with my very life. Now,

Yuon," and he laid a kind hand on my shoulder, "let not the thought of Count Robert trouble you. He deserved whatever happened to him. Let the past go. You cannot change it. Your father and your sweet sister, Mignon, will bless God this night that you be safe on board my ship and far off on the broad bosom of the ocean, where no hostile hands can reach you. Think on the great and glorious adventure now before you. We go to a New World. I, who have been there, tell you that it is a most wonderful world, where live strange peoples, monstrous animals, both in the water and on the land, and where you will see many natural beauties and wonders of land and water and I know not what other marvels. And we do all for the greater glory of God and the honor and the power of King and Country —Aye, lad, when I get to thinking and talking of these things, there's no stopping my tongue, if there be ears present to listen. So get you and your ears on deck and to Goliath. Then I can get to my work," and he dismissed me, calling after me as I went out the door, "Forget not the sword-play to-morrow!"

At first I saw no signs of Goliath on the deck and I paused under a light and looked somewhat anxiously about me; for all things here were strange to me and it was a black night. Then I caught sight of his great bulk a few feet away. He lay with his back propped up against a mast and the braids of his black beard were nodding slowly up and down above his breast. As I looked, he suddenly jerked his head upward, as a man, in like position, sometimes will when within two winks of falling asleep, and sighed mightily and stretched out his huge arms above his head and a mumbling grumble of words came from his mouth.

"That boy, wilt he never come?" he growled. "I be

that sleepy I could bite the head off a barking dog and swallow it to keep me awake! And my back! St. Joseph, that mast should have a fat cushion around its hard belly, if I am to make a bed out of it! If Yuon comes not soon, I'll——"

"And what do you now that Yuon be here?" I asked and took a quick step toward him and laid my hand threateningly on my sword. "Remember, Yuon has now the De Valour Sword!" and I tried to look very threatening and fierce.

At that he rolled his eyes in my direction and grinned.

"I will put Yuon to bed, according to Captain Cartier's command," he answered and his grin widened and he slowly reared his giant bulk upright on his two feet. "St. Anthony, but that be no fit bed for a man's bones to lie on!" and he glared down at the foot of the mast, where he had lain. "Come, let us seek a softer!" and he conducted me to his own small cabin, which was near that of Captain Cartier, for the big fellow acted as a bodyguard to our captain.

There were two bunks in the little cabin, lying one above the other against one side of the room. On the remaining sides hung several great bows, many quivers full of long arrows, a large battle-ax, a huge cuirass, as, in truth, it needs must be, if Goliath ever got himself inside of it; but I saw no armor for his arms and legs. Evidently he wished to fight, when fight he must, with limbs unhampered.

"Now we be home," said Goliath, glancing around his little room with an air of pride. "He-ho-hum! but I am sleepy!" and he gaped and stretched his great arms. "I was routed out of my bunk at a most ungodly hour this morning and to bed I go forthwith and without talk. May the god of sleep give you restful slumber!

Good-night," and, without more words, he off with his clothes and into his bunk.

In truth, I was glad there was to be no talking; for I had many things in my mind to think over and I could think better with a silent tongue in my mouth. So I, likewise, off with my clothes and climbed up into my bunk almost as soon as did Goliath. In five minutes I heard him snoring; but sleep did not come to my eyes as quickly, tired though I was with the day's exciting happenings.

Thoughts of my father and my sister troubled me. The unexpected suddenness of my departure had left so many things unsaid that now I wished I had had opportunity to say—I had not even bid Mignon good-by. Then the De Bocharts worried me. Would they seek to take revenge on my father and sister, when I was not to be found? But I resolutely drove this worry quickly from my mind, for I soon discovered that thinking on it mended nothing and that it was better to let the past go, as Captain Cartier had said. At the thought of Captain Cartier came the remembrance of his words concerning the glorious adventure on which we were now fairly embarked and my blood began to sing through my veins. I was still young enow to think only of the romance and the exciting adventures it promised; of the wild and strange peoples and the monsters on the land and in the water I would see and, mayhap, kill; while the thought of actually discovering new lands and new folk, the like of which no white man had ever seen before, quickened every drop of adventure-blood inside of me. All these things coming together in my mind so stirred and excited my imagination that I think it must have been two hours before my eyes closed in sleep, with the sounds of the water slipping along the

sides of the ship and the creaking and the rattling of the great sails over my head, as they strove with the wind, and the low voices of the heavy timbers of the ship defying the waves, ever singing a strange but pleasant lullaby in my ears.

CHAPTER V

I MAKE A LOYAL FRIEND

WHEN morning came, I was wide awake, even before Goliath awoke, notwithstanding the lateness of my going to sleep the night before; for a great curiosity had me in its clutches and pulled me out of my sleep and out of my bunk and into my clothes. The strangeness of my immediate surroundings, the unusual sounds that came to my ears, the rolling motion of the great ship, all made me most anxious to get on deck and see what it was all about. Accordingly, I left Goliath snoring in his bunk and hurried on deck.

The sky was cloudless and the sun was just beginning to lift itself above the eastern rim of the ocean. I thought it a wondrous sight, as I stood watching the red flames make glorious all the eastern sky. For possibly five minutes I had stood looking on this beautiful sight, when I heard a step on the deck behind me and, turning quickly, saw a tall, gallantly dressed young man approaching me. At the first sight of him I knew he must be one of the young noblemen, whom the love of adventure and the lure of glory had prevailed on to sail with Captain Cartier on this voyage to the New World.

"A glorious morning," he greeted me with a smile, "that augurs well for our voyage. I see that you, too, love to watch the sun come up out of the water of the ocean. A gloriously beautiful sight, is it not? Now," and he smiled again, "I do not think we have met before. Suffer me to introduce myself: Claudius de Pont

Brian, son of Lord Montcevell and Cup-bearer to the Dolphin of France. At your service," and he paused and bowed very grandly.

"And I am Yuon de Valour, son of the Chevalier Lauren de Valour of St. Malo. At your service," I replied, likewise making my grandest bow.

"Now, that the formalities are over and since we are to be comrades on this long voyage to the New World, would it not be better to forego all titles when speaking to each other and for you to call me Claude and for me to call you Yuon?" and his smile broadened genially.

I felt most certain that I was going to like this pleasantly smiling young man, so I agreed willingly with him and thereafter we became Claude and Yuon to each other, albeit he was much higher in rank than I, but never did he make me feel this difference in our stations.

"Now, friend Yuon," and I saw his eyes go to the sword by my side, "I would ask you a question, which has been trembling on the tip of my tongue ever since I heard your father's name. Have I your permission?"

"Aye and most willingly will I answer it, sobeit I am able," I replied.

"Is your father the Chevalier de Valour, who owns the famous De Valour Sword? I have heard much of the fame of that sword and have long wished to meet its owner and have a look at the sword."

"Then have thy wish and thy look; for I be now the wearer of that famous sword and this is the very sword itself," and I snapped the sword swiftly out of its scabbard and, catching it by the middle of the blade, held the hilt out to him. "Only yesterday morn did my father give the De Valour Sword into my keeping; for, you must know, a De Valour holds it but in trust, until his first-born son is worthy to receive it," and I smiled,

well-pleased to have heard him speak thus of my father and the De Valour Sword.

His right hand went eagerly to the hilt and the other to the blade, with a caressing, loving touch, while his eyes ran up and down its bright sheen, with a look in them that told me that here was a true lover of a good sword and one it would delight the heart of my father to meet.

"Aye, Yuon, 'tis a splendid blade, one to be depended on in time of trouble like a real friend," and he bent the blade and watched its quick springing back to the straight line with joyous eyes. "I have heard it said there is not another blade like it in all France. I——"

But here I saw his body stiffen and come quickly to attention, while the look in his eyes went back of me. At the same time I heard a quick firm step behind me and turned just as Captain Cartier came up to where we were standing, a pleasant smile on his face.

"Helloa!" he greeted. "I see I have some early birds on board my ship and 'tis the early bird that catches the worm, so 'tis said. At least it is the early lads who see the beauties of this glorious sunrise. Is it not a wondrous sight?" and his eyes went to the red glories in the east, which were now awesomely beautiful; for a shimmering splendor of white clouds had piled themselves up betwixt us and the sun, which shone through them in a glory of red lights.

" 'Tis the good God telling us of the coming glories of this venturesome voyage," De Pont Brian said reverently.

"God grant that it be a true augury of our success!" Captain Cartier added solemnly; and then he stood silently staring westward over the ocean. I am sure his eyes saw things beyond our visioning.

"Ah," he exclaimed a moment later, "I be dreaming again!" and he gave a quick jerk to his head, as I have seen a man do when suddenly awakened. "Pardon! But now I be back to earth again. Yuon, come you with me. I would talk over that matter we spoke of yesterday eve. Pardon us, De Pont Brian," and, with a quick bow to my companion, he hurried me to his cabin.

"Yuon," he said the moment we were inside and the door shut, "I have bethought me that it would be wise to put your skill to the test before I announce you as Sword-Master of my ships to my officers and these young noblemen. You be over young for me to take for granted so great a skill with your sword, without seeing it first with my own eyes. Wilt make trial with me, Yuon? Your father told me how you had caught his sword and flung it from his hand. Do the like to me and I will grant your skill."

He paused and his eyes went to mine with a look in them that told me that it was more his eagerness to see that sword-trick performed than his doubt of my ability, that caused him to make this request.

"Most willingly," I replied. "When and where shall we make trial?"

"Here and now," and his eyes sparkled with eagerness. "I want no on-lookers, Yuon; for I expect you will defeat me sadly," and he smiled and bowed.

We soon stood ready, with our swords in our hands. There were three small windows in the cabin, which gave a good light for our sword-play, and a space on the opposite side of the table from the fireplace, which supplied ample room. Captain Cartier pointed to this space and, in a moment more, we both stood therein, with our naked swords in our hands.

"Ready, Yuon?" and I saw Captain Cartier's lips

tighten and his eyes harden and I knew he would do his best to defeat me and was glad.

"Aye," I replied and I determined to end the trial as soon as possible, for I liked not this sword-play with my captain, where a slip of the foot, a roll of the ship, or other accident might cause me inadvertently to do him injury.

"Then engage!" and our two blades came together, with that pleasant ringing sound which sends a thrill through the blood in every true swordsman's veins.

Our first few passes told me that Captain Cartier had no knowledge of that sword-trick I had learned in Paris and that I had only to await my opportunity. It came sooner than I expected. He thought he saw an opening and started a quick thrust. This was my opportunity and my blade darted forward, with all my skill and quickness back of it. Then came that peculiar twist of the wrist and quick powerful thrust sideways, which the sword-master at Paris had been at so great pains to teach me; and the sword of Captain Cartier flew violently from his hand and clanged, most musically to my ears, against the side of the room.

For a moment Captain Cartier stood too amazed to speak, his left hand gripping and rubbing his right and his eyes looking down at the emptiness of it, as if he doubted their own evidence.

"Body of God! How did you do that, Yuon?" he at length exclaimed, as his eyes went wonderingly to my face. "Zounds! but my right hand is as numb as if it had been asleep for a week!" and he slapped it violently with his left. "I'll—I'll grant your skill, Yuon, and without further trial," and he chuckled; "and I will name you Sword-Master of my ships this very afternoon. Now, teach me that trick!" and his eyes lighted

with eagerness, as he quickly caught up his sword from the floor.

But his wrist had not the needed suppleness and strength, nor his arm the quickness, and, try as he might, he could not master the trick. Certain gifts have to be given with life and can neither be taught nor learned, unless the natural aptitude is there; and so it was with this sword-trick, so far as Captain Cartier was concerned. I was descended from a long line of master-swordsmen; and, in addition, from my tenth birthday on, my father had had me taught swordsmanship and all other feats of strength and skill befitting a gentleman, for at least two hours each day, save only Sundays, in order that I might be worthy one day of bearing the De Valour Sword. So that it was no marvel that I had great skill with the sword, albeit but a boy of eighteen.

I think it was fully an hour before Captain Cartier became certainly convinced that the mastery of this trick was not for him.

"Alas! I cannot accomplish it now, my wrist is too stiff, my muscles are too slow," he at length admitted regretfully, as he slid his sword back into its scabbard. "Truly I think there never was a time when I could have mastered it. It is a great gift, Yuon, your gift of swordsmanship. The De Valour Sword could not have been given into more worthy hands. Now, then, at three o'clock this afternoon, come you to my cabin to meet my officers and the young noblemen. Then will I make known my purpose to appoint you Sword-Master of my ships. Also I will instruct them to report to you at a certain hour each day, save on Sundays, for lessons in swordcraft, in order that all may keep in proper physical training during our long voyage. You will give your

first lesson this afternoon, at the close of our meeting in my cabin, so come prepared. You will find young De Pont Brian your most dangerous rival. He is accounted one of the best swordsmen in France. After him comes Louis du Val, he whom I spoke of as a kinsman of Count de Bochart. Master these two and none of the others will question your swordsmanship. Fling their swords from their hands, as you did my sword from mine, and you will gladden my heart; for both be somewhat over proud of their swordcraft. Aye, 'twill be worth the price of a silk surcoat, richly embroidered, to see the haughty face of young Du Val, when you fling his sword from his hand, as I doubt not but what you will!" and Captain Cartier smiled happily. "Now I would be alone and at my work. Do not fail to gladden my heart this afternoon," he called after me, as I went out the door, and he had the grin of a boy on his face, as I shut the door behind me.

CHAPTER VI

I HAVE MY SWORDSMANSHIP TESTED—AND MAKE AN ENEMY

NOW, when three o'clock came and I made ready to go to the cabin of Captain Cartier to make trial of my swordcraft, against men grown and all, doubtless, well-skilled in sword-play, many doubts began to assail me and I hesitated; for, in truth, I was young and, mayhap, in the boastfulness of that youth, I had overestimated my skill. Then it was that I remembered these words of my father: "When a deed is to be done, Yuon," he said, "put all thy heart into its doing and give not a thought to defeat, albeit the difficulties loom up mountainlike before thee. Thy very determination may enable thee to accomplish the seemingly impossible." At the recalling of my father's words and the thought of the De Valour Sword, I hesitated no longer, but went boldly and knocked on the door of Captain Cartier's cabin.

When I opened the door I saw that the cabin was nearly filled with the officers and the noblemen from the three ships. At that sight my heart once again began to sink; but Captain Cartier, whose eyes were on my face, came quickly to my aid, by introducing me, very pleasantly, to all present whom I did not know; and, by the time the introductions were ended, my heart was back in its proper place and my confidence in myself restored.

I could see by the curious and surprised looks that had greeted me the moment I had opened the door, that, doubtless, Captain Cartier had already told them his purpose and that he was expecting the new Sword-Master to enter at any moment and that he had done this without making known either the name or the age of the man to whom he had given this appointment. Then, when the door had opened and I had entered and they saw but a tall youth, with the down still on his cheeks, their surprise is not to be wondered at. De Pont Brian at once gave me a pleased smile and a heartening shake of the hand; but I saw the surprise on his face and that two bright sparks had come into his eyes and an eager look on his face and I knew that he was already longing to cross his sword with the famous De Valour Sword and that he had not a doubt with whom the victory would lie; for, was he not one of the best swordsmen in France and I but a youth? His looks piqued me a little and I determined to show him, when the time came, that he was taking too much for granted.

As for young Louis du Val: my eyes had gone quickly to his face; for I was most anxious to see if my name meant aught to him, as it assuredly would, if he had knowledge of the hurt I had done his kinsman, Count Robert. He had much the same haughty arrogance in the look of his face and eyes that I had seen on the countenance of the young count. When he was introduced to me and he heard my name, I saw only scorn of me and my sword and a haughty desire to quickly humble me and to show up my pretensions as a swordsman before all present. I determined to humble some of his haughtiness, if it might be, and have no pity in the humbling.

As for the others: they showed great surprise at my

youth and abided my testing; but I am most certain that some of them thought there must be a joke of the captain's stowed away somewhere in the hold of the matter, this the more because Captain Cartier had been known to jest before.

When the introductions were done, Captain Cartier, who always made use of but few words in the doing of things, came at once to the matter of my swordsmanship. First, he told them that he himself had tested my ability and had not found me wanting; but that, on account of their evident doubts of the fitness of one so young being made Sword-Master over them, he would place my skill on trial before their own eyes; and that if any man of those present proved himself a better swordsman than was I he would make that man Sword-Master in my place.

Hardly were these words out of his mouth, when up came the hands of every man in the room, all eager to make trial of my skill; but young Du Val stepped arrogantly forth and scornfully flung his glove in my face.

"There lies my gage," he said and pointed to where the glove lay at my feet, "and thereby I claim the first trial of skill, for I would be Sword-Master myself," and he smiled impudently at me and made a most sweeping bow to Captain Cartier.

The fall of that glove had been followed by a moment's deep and startled silence and then nearly every man in the room started forward, as if he were about to cry out his indignation. But Captain Cartier with a peremptory motion of his hand waved all back and silenced all tongues.

"I like not the manner of your challenge, Louis du Val," he said. "It was most discourteously done. And,

did I not feel that young De Valour here would surely teach your arrogance a much needed lesson, I would bar you from taking part in the trials because of it. Yuon, art willing to go on trial with Du Val?"

"Aye, gladly," I replied and my hand went to the hilt of the De Valour Sword.

The face of Du Val had flushed angrily at Captain Cartier's words, but he had sense enow to keep a still tongue in his head, for he knew that it was not well to answer back the words of authority.

In a moment more a sufficient space was cleared in the cabin for the sword-play, by crowding all back into one end of the room. While this was being done, I felt a light touch on my arm and De Pont Brian bent his face close to mine and I saw that it was flushed with indignation.

"Yuon," he whispered, "my heart is with you. Pierce that bag of conceit, humble that unmannered yokel!" and he smiled that pleasant smile of his.

"I will," I answered shortly, for now I had no doubts and I was angry and I knew that a De Valour was always at his best when angry.

"But you must give me trial after him, if you win," he added a bit doubtfully. "But, Yuon, be on your guard. I have had sword-play with him and I know him most skilful. I——"

But here Captain Cartier put a stop to all further talk and bade Du Val and me take up our positions. This done, we made each other the bow-courteous, drew our swords, saluted, stepped back a pace and stood ready for the sword-play to begin. As I faced Du Val, I noted the arrogant scorn of me in his eyes and in the curl of his lips.

"Boy," he said, "at my third thrust I send your blade flying from your hand like a flung stone."

"Boaster, that is to be seen," was all the reply I made.

"Ready?" called Captain Cartier, from his station betwixt us.

"Aye," we both answered.

"Then engage!" and he leaped quickly to one side.

The next instant I heard the joyous clang of the meeting of our two blades.

"One thrust!" called Du Val a moment later, as his sword darted swiftly in.

I parried the thrust, my eyes watching his eyes.

"Two!" Du Val called, his eyes like two pin-points of light.

This swift thrust I also parried, but with more difficulty, and I saw the light of triumph leap into Du Val's eyes.

"THREE!" There was victory in the great shout he made of it, as his sword darted forward, lightning-like, and its blade engaged itself with my blade and—went flying from his hand, as if, in very truth, it were a flung stone, and he staggered backward, gripping his numbed right hand with his left and with a look of utter astoundment on his face.

He had played directly into my hands, when his blade had attempted to grip mine!

I think every man in the room in his surprise at that sudden and unexpected ending of the contest, gave a quick gasping indrawing of his breath and then burst into a hearty cheer and crowded around me, eager to congratulate me. From which it may be seen that Du Val was not over popular with the officers and young noblemen.

As for that haughty youth, he stood for a moment, very white of face and with his mouth wide agape with astonishment, rubbing and shaking his numbed right hand, for I had flung the sword from him most violently, and looking first at me and then at his sword lying on the floor, where it had fallen after banging against the side of the room. Then his face flushed angrily and an evil look came into his eyes and he took a quick, protesting step toward Captain Cartier.

"An accident!" he cried. "An unfair sword-trick! I demand another trial! No boy can——"

"Unfair?" and my hand went quickly to the hilt of my sword, which I had sheathed. "That be a word which needs explaining. I—" but here Captain Cartier broke in with a sternness in his voice I had never heard before.

"De Valour, silence. Du Val, pick up your sword and face your defeat like a man, not like a peevish boy. It was a most fair contest. I call on all present to witness its fairness."

"Aye, most fair! I swear it by my great bow!" roared a great voice from the now open door, and I saw Goliath standing in the doorway, his face aglow and his broad shoulders blocking the door from side to side.

"Gentlemen," and Captain Cartier stepped into the open space and held up his hand peremptorily. "I will have no fighting on board my ships between my own men. Louis du Val," and his eyes fixed themselves sternly on the young man's face, "you owe an apology to Yuon de Valour for that shameful word 'unfair'. Make it, I, your commander, demand it. Make it, now, in the presence of all who heard you utter the shameful accusation."

Du Val stood for a moment glaring about the room. Not a look of sympathy did he get. Then, with more grace than I thought he had in him, he turned to me.

"I have a most evil temper," he said. "For a moment, in the shame of my defeat by you, a boy, it got the better of me. Yuon de Valour, I now apologize to you for the use of that most unmannerly word 'unfair'——"

"And unjust," broke in Captain Cartier.

"Most unmannerly and unjust word 'unfair'," continued Du Val without hesitation; "and I here declare that I was most fairly defeated by a better swordsman than myself," and he made me a sweeping courtesy.

"Art satisfied, Yuon?" demanded Captain Cartier.

"Aye, and here is my hand to prove it," and I stepped impulsively forward and offered my hand to Du Val. He took it and shook it heartily enow, nathless, I thought the hand lacked somewhat in warmth and that the smile on his lips had something of mockery in it.

Now, when this matter had been seemingly settled in this satisfactory manner, Captain Cartier asked if there were others who would test the skill of his sword-master. At this De Pont Brian presented himself as a contestant.

"Not for swordsmanship honors, but for the honor of crossing swords with so skilled a swordsman as De Valour and with so famous a sword as the De Valour Sword," he said and smiled, which I thought a most kindly way of saying his challenge.

In a moment more we were both ready for the sword-play and Captain Cartier gave the word to begin.

"I, also, know M. Herué, Master-Swordsman of Paris," he whispered warningly as our blades crossed. I thought it was like the gallant young gentleman that he was to give me this warning.

It needed but a few thrusts and parries to tell me that in my sword-play with De Pont Brian I would need all my agility and skill even to hold my own, so evenly

were we matched. The men about us soon became greatly excited and even Captain Cartier could not completely control his emotions.

"A brave thrust! Well parried! Bravely done! There, you nearly had him!" I heard him call out in his excitement, as the bright flames of our two swords danced before my eyes and minute after minute went by with neither gaining an advantage. "By the saints! I never before saw such swordsmanship!" and he leaped up on top of the table the better to watch the sword-play. "Yuon, Yuon, do not fail me!"

But even this appeal did not enable me to better De Pont Brian. Every one of my thrusts, no matter how quickly nor how skilfully given, he parried; and, in the meantime, he kept my own brain and eyes and arm most busy parrying his own thrusts. As for M. Herué's trick of the sword, in very truth he knew it and I marveled at the skill with which he guarded himself against it, whilst I was hard pushed to keep him from playing the same sword-trick on me.

Thus, for a marvelously short half-hour, or so it seemed to me, did we strive, each to better the other; and then Captain Cartier threw up both hands and called out.

"Have done!" he cried, "for, by the glory of the saints! I think there be not the difference of the weight of an eyelash in swordsmanship betwixt you two! And so have done," and the moment we had rested the points of our swords on the floor, he grabbed a hand of each and rung both with equal warmth. "Mon Dieu! in very sooth, but I am most happy to have two such skilled swordsmen on board my ship! What say you, men? Shall I name De Pont Brian Sword-Master along with De Valour? Doubtless, seeing that you have such skilled

masters to instruct you, you would keep both of their blades busy?"

"Aye! Aye! Make you the two of them our Sword-Masters!" came in a great shout from the officers and the young noblemen, as all pressed eagerly forward to congratulate us, all save Louis du Val, who, it was said, had left the cabin the moment the contest had ended, looking somewhat crestfallen. In truth, had I not vowed to humble him?

Thus, to my great satisfaction, ended this test of my swordsmanship; and it pleasured me much to welcome De Pont Brian as a sharer in my honors; for, truly, from the first my heart had warmed to his kindly courtliness of manners and actions.

As De Pont Brian and I were about to go from the cabin, Captain Cartier called us back.

"There is yet another matter I would speak of before you go," he said and smiled, as he noted that we advanced arm in arm, as if we were already leal friends, as, in truth, we were. "You, I think," and he turned to De Pont Brian, "have had assigned for your use the small cabin, which lies next to that of my big bodyguard, Goliath. "Now," and a questioning look came on his face, "I find that I have one more officer than I counted on, who came on board unexpectedly and late, and I needs must ask you, De Pont Brian, to share your cabin with him," and his eyes went to the face of De Pont Brian.

As he said this I saw De Pont Brian start a little, as if the thought of a cabinmate displeased him. Captain Cartier, noting this, smiled yet more broadly and continued.

"By right of your superior rank, De Pont Brian, you are the only one who has a cabin all to yourself. All the

other officers' cabins are filled, so that there is no room save with you for this unexpected officer."

I saw a cloud come quickly on De Pont Brian's face and he started, what I think would have been a protest had not Captain Cartier quickly raised his hand for silence and continued.

"Now, what say you, De Pont Brian, wouldst share thy cabin with De Valour here? He is the officer I spoke of and not yet have I given him quarters. It would seem fitting that my two Sword-Masters should occupy the same cabin, since they appear to be already friends. What answer have you?" and he smiled quizzically.

"Most willingly," declared De Pont Brian eagerly and the cloud went quickly from his face and the sun shone on it again. "There be two bunks already in it. You are most welcome to share the cabin with me, Yuon," and he turned to me with that winning smile of his lighting up his face.

"Then, that is settled. Now I look for much help from you two youths and your two swords in keeping the time of the officers and those wild young gentlemen's blades occupied and themselves in good-humor and spirits during the tediousness of this long voyage; for, if they be not kept busy and interested in something, they grow peevish and quarrelsome, with naught to look at but themselves and the great sweep of the waters of the ocean. Now, get you to your cabin," and he gave us a push toward the door and we went quickly out.

Thus it was that De Pont Brian and I became cabin-mates and thus it came about that we began that leal and most faithful friendship, which has lasted on to this very day.

CHAPTER VII

TWO SAVAGES FROM THE NEW WORLD—GOLIATH HITS A STRANGE MARK

CAPTAIN CARTIER had a place prepared for the practise of our sword-play on the deck of his own ship, the *Great Herminia*, with a sort of awning made of old sails over it to keep the sun from our heads and the rain from our bodies. Thither, on every afternoon when the weather permitted, save on Sundays, came the ships' officers and the young noblemen for their daily sword-practise, at which we had great entertainment and sufficient bodily exercise to keep the megrims from souring the blood, our bodies in fine trim and ourselves in good humor.

Louis du Val came with the others; but he always so managed that he received his instruction from De Pont Brian. Never would he take his sword-exercise with me. At first I tried to show him that I bore him no ill-will, but the sourness of his temper and the superciliousness of his manner toward me, as if, forsooth, I were hardly fit to cross swords with him, soon caused me to make no further efforts to win his friendliness. I thought it absurd for a grown man to show such pettiness of spirit. In truth, he had so sour a manner and was so touchy of temper and so haughty of mien that I do not think he had a leal friend on board the three ships. He had his quarters on the *Hermerillon*, which was the smallest of our three ships, so that I seldom came in

contact with him, save at our sword-play, which was a matter of some satisfaction to me.

From the first there began a friendly rivalry betwixt De Pont Brian and me, as to who could first play that sword-trick of M. Herué on the other; but, although we made trial of our skill nearly every day, to the great entertainment of the others, so evenly were we matched in skill, that neither could catch and hurl the sword from the hand of the other. We tried to teach the feat to the others; but not one of them was able to do it, not even so fine a swordsman as was Du Val, to his evident great chagrin. There was a lack of something in each one of them. I think Captain Cartier was right, when he called it a gift that one had first to possess, or no amount of training would give him the skill to achieve the feat.

Now, I am going to ask you to take for granted that this daily exercise with the sword went on every day, except on Sundays and when the roll of the ship made it impossible, during all our long voyage to the New World and thereafter whenever we had opportunity, even though, mayhap, I make little mention of it hereinafter.

I found that my admiration and regard for my cabin-mate, De Pont Brian, grew with our acquaintanceship. He had the most loyal of hearts and breathed the very spirit of true chivalry, which, alas! is now so seldom seen in our young noblemen; and, withall, he had so great a love of adventure that, notwithstanding his high rank and position in France, he had left all to sail with Captain Cartier to this little known and strange New World. From the first we became almost inseparable. Because of this so evident liking for each other, Cap-

tain Cartier often laughingly called us the Ship's Twins, which we both thought a compliment.

Now, since we took no part in the management of the ship, neither of us knowing aught of the sailing of so great a boat, we were not overburdened with duties and had much time to ourselves, which we spent as we thought best. Sometimes we wandered about the ship and talked with the sailors, especially with Goliath, the bowman, for in him we found a great store of wild and improbable tales which entertained us greatly; and sometimes we two stood together in the very prow of the ship and looked out over the great expanse of ever mysterious and ceaselessly moving waters of the ocean. This was our favorite lookout, because from there we could gaze into that mysterious and unknown West, wherein lay the New World toward which we were sailing, sailing ever westward and as yet not getting any glimmer of land new or old.

One day, mayhap a week after our sailing from St. Malo, as we both stood there in the prow of the ship, looking, as we had often done before, out over the ocean and dreaming of what that strange New World might hold in store for each of us we fell to talking somewhat after this manner, keeping our eyes, as we spoke, ever on that misty western horizon, beyond which lay the shores of adventure for us.

"Yuon," asked De Pont Brian, "what think you of this New World? You have lived all your life in St. Malo, whence our captain sailed on his first voyage to America and must have heard much talk from him and the sailors who went with him, concerning the marvels and the adventures to be met with in that strange land. Then, too, your fishing boats have long been going to that great island, with the long bank, where the fish do

gather in such great multitudes that a ship can be loaded with them in a few hours—and all sailor folk love to spin yarns of their voyages. Doubtless you have listened to their tales also. But I have passed the greater part of my life in Paris and know little of this New World to which we are going, save what I have gathered from the wild and improbable tales, doubtless with little truth in them, which came to me through many mouths, with each mouth adding its own flavor of exaggeration, until the whole had become fat with falsehoods. Wilt enlighten me, Yuon, and tell me, without any garnishments of fancy, somewhat of what I really may expect to see and experience when I get to that new land?"

"Truly, that would be a bit difficult," I laughed; "for I myself know not how to separate the truth from the garnishments, as you call them, since none can tell what wonders may be seen, what strange adventures might chance in a world where the eyes of civilized man have never looked and the feet of civilized man have never walked. Captain Cartier purposes, or so I understand, to go in search of that supposed northwest passage to the riches of the Orient, which means that we are to sail where ships have never sailed before and traverse lands and rivers where white men have never gone before and whereof no white man living can speak truly, because no white man living has yet explored the region to which we are bound. Only the coast and the islands bordering on it have, as yet, been touched by our ships; and God alone wots what lies waiting us in the unknown regions backward from the coast. Aye, that be the big lure of it for me, for all, the unknown and its promises of strange and stirring adventures, adventures the like of which no white man living has ever experienced. This it is that stirs my blood and makes me most eager to

get to his new land and see whether or no my dreams of it come true. But, as for the country itself and what its peoples, animals and vegetation are like, I know little and that little I know but from the tales told me by sailors who have been only to the coast; and, as you know, most dearly do all sailors love to make big their stories with strange exaggerations. But of this I am certainly assured, Claude, 'twill be a glorious adventure!"

"A most glorious adventure, Yuon!" and the eyes of De Pont Brian began to sparkle. "And, mayhap, you and I, Yuon, will be enabled to do some small deeds, make some discovery, that will bring in some small measure glory and honor to our King and Country and to the names our ancestors have made glorious. Aye, aye, the very thought of this adventure makes my blood course through my veins, as runs a spurred horse. I——"

"Look! Look, Claude!" and I eagerly caught him by the sleeve and jerked. "Look, there come the two savages Captain Cartier brought back with him, when he returned to France from his First Voyage to the New World. 'Tis the first time I have seen them on deck since our sailing. I am told that they have been most sick, with that evil sickness, which comes from the rolling of the ship on the unquiet waters of the ocean. They be the very ones for us to question regarding the New World. Already they can understand and make themselves understood in our language. I will call them— But, saints above! look how they are dressed!" I exclaimed, as they drew near.

Taignoagny and Domagaia, for such were the savage names of these wild men, had both discarded their native manner of dressing and, to their evident great

satisfaction, were now fearfully and wonderfully clothed in what were evidently the cast-off fineries of some of the younger noblemen at the King's court, where they had been made much of. Taignoagny had on a black hat, with two white ostrich feathers curving gracefully along its brim, one on each side, while two large earrings, made of glittering bits of glass and brass, hung pendant from his ears. On his shoulders was a small black velvet cape, lined with bright red silk. He had on a coat that once must have adorned the court of the King and underneath it he proudly displayed a waistcoat of the brightest scarlet that I have ever seen, on which, to add to its glories, he had fastened a dozen or more brightly polished, round, buttonlike, bits of tin. His waist was encircled by a yellow silk scarf, covered with pink birds in full flight. Below this he wore a pair of nobleman's old trunk-hose, ending, curiously and incongruously enow, in bare ankles and brightly adorned and soft-tanned deerskin moccasins, the only concession he made to his native dress.

As for Domagaia, who was slim and only of medium height, he wore the complete dress, much the worse for wear and somewhat moth eaten, of a foppish young court gallant. There were many holes in it through which the brown skin of the wild man could be seen; but not a whit cared he, for he walked as proudly in it, as if it had that day come fresh and resplendent from the tailor. I am sure from the actions of the two, as they walked toward us, that they fancied themselves the most elegantly dressed savages that ever walked on the deck of a ship, as, doubtless, they were.

Truly the court gallants had been generous to the poor savages with their cast-off braveries!

I called them and they came quickly to us, grinning

broadly when we shook hands with them after the manner of white men. They had rather high cheek bones and were somewhat broad of face and coarse of mouth and features and had a dark skin of almost the color of bronze; but, dressed as they were, they might have passed for foolishly clothed Frenchmen, going to a costume ball—all but their eyes. I never saw such a pair of eyes in any French head. A beast seemed to look out of them, a cruel beast; and yet not a beast, but a something that lies betwixt beast and man—I cannot better describe the queer feeling and thought that went through me as I looked into those snakelike eyes; but, mayhap, you will understand me.

I could see that Claude was even more interested in them than what I was; for this was the first time he had ever set eyes on a native of that New World to which we were bound. While I had seen these same two savages before in St. Malo. When they stood before us, I saw his eyes go searchingly to their faces, even as mine had done, and a disappointed look come into them.

"Odds blades!" he whispered to me. "They don't look much different from Frenchmen! only no Frenchman would dress like that, unless he were crazy. I thought to see them wearing nothing but breech-clouts and a few feathers stuck in their hair. But, what black and wild-looking eyes they have! Surely, 'tis a savage that looks out of them! Their evil glitter makes shivers come inside of me."

He, too, had noticed that strange wild look in their eyes!

"Ho!" said Taignoagny, by way of greeting.

"Ho!" declared Domagaia.

"Ho!" repeated Claude and I.

"You like France?" I asked to start the questions.

"Like French clothes," Taignoagny replied, glancing down at his crimson waistcoat and grinning. "No like houses. Too many. Get in way. No like sleep in them, live in them. Our houses much better. You see when get to our land. Our land much good land. Squaws more good. Work, chop wood, build fires, cook, dig ground for planting. Men have much good time. Hunt, smoke, fight enemies, protect squaws and papooses, sit in warm sun, talk, no work. Squaws work. French fools. No make squaws work. You see when get to my land."

"He may be right," grinned Claude. "What think you, Yuon?"

"I'd like to see him try it on my sister Mignon. She'd tear the hair out of his head!" I laughed.

"Then I knock down with club and make do what I say," scowled Taignoagny. "No do, knock down again. Frenchmans too much fine words. Club better. You see when get to my land."

"I'm not sure but what he's right," laughed Claude. "Try it on Mignon the next time she refuses to do what you ask her."

"And get my eyes scratched out of my head—Hello, what's the excitement?" and I turned quickly and looked to where a knot of men had gathered at the bulwarks of the ship near the stern. Overtopping them all I saw the head of Goliath and the end of one of his great bows, but, on account of the men crowding around him, I could not see what he was doing. "'Tis Goliath," I cried. "He's up to something! Come!" and I started on the run for the crowd, followed by Claude and the two wild men.

When we had pushed our way through the crowd and had come near to where Goliath stood, we saw that he held a huge bow in his hand, the largest bow

I had ever seen, and was fastening a small but strong cord to an unusually long arrow near its head. I wondered greatly what the big man was planning to do.

"Want a fish for dinner, Yuon?" he called the moment he caught sight of me. "Watch me," and, carefully coiling the cord on top of the bulwark, he fitted the arrow to his bowstring, drew it back nearly to its head and looked down over the water.

My eyes followed his eyes and I saw that a number of long slim fish were racing sportively along a short distance from the side of the ship, now one, now another, darting up to the surface. Their movements were very swift and jerky and they paused but an instant at the surface. It did not seem possible to me that Goliath could hit one of these swiftly moving fish with his arrow.

"Surely, Yuon, he does not expect to strike one of those darting fish with his shaft?" Claude exclaimed. "Why, they be a good thirty yards from the side of the ship and they dart about like arrows. If he hits one, 'twill be a marvelous shot!"

"Goliath is a marvelous shot with his bow; but, truly, I do not think that even he can hit one of those fish—Ah-h!"

At this instant the bowstring twanged, even as one of the largest of the fish darted up to the surface. I saw its silvery side above the water for a moment and the next instant I saw only a swirl of foam and fish and water. Goliath's arrow had struck true and had transfixed the fish just back of the gills. In a moment more he had drawn the fish up on deck by means of the cord.

"Got him, didn't I, Yuon!" and he pulled the arrow out of the fish. "Hope he makes good eating," and he handed the fish to me and turned to Claude. "Wouldst have a mate to Yuon's fish, De Pont Brian?" and he

grinned and again began carefully coiling the cord on top of the bulwark.

"Aye, that I would! And, if you hit another fish, then I'll know this was not an accident," answered De Pont Brian, the amaze of that first shot still big in his eyes.

"If I can't strike as big and as shining a mark at that distance as one of those silver fish make, I'll throw away my bow and get me one of those newfangled harquebuses that spit a two-ounce ball out of their mouths and kick like a mule with their hind leg," and Goliath chuckled. "Now watch me."

By this time he had the cord again coiled and stood ready with arrow on bowstring and his eyes on the sporting fish. Suddenly I saw the arrow come up on a level with his eyes, saw the great right arm pull back the string until it almost touched his ear, saw the strong fingers release the arrow, heard the humming twang of the string—and then came a joyous shout from De Pont Brian.

"He hit the fish! By all that's holy, he hit the fish, Yuon!" he yelled.

"Now, what think you? Have I need to change my bow for the gun," chuckled Goliath, as he pulled in the fish and drew the arrow out and handed the fish to De Pont Brian. "Nothing like a long bow, when you want to get what you shoot at," and Goliath turned challengingly to the men gathered around him.

"Aye, aye, when 'tis Goliath's arm that pulls back the bowstring and his eyes that direct the arrow," grinned an old and much-tattooed sailor. "But, as for me, I'll still put my trust in one of them guns, that roars like thunder and puts the fear of God, or, mayhap, the devil, or both together, into the hearts of the savages.

That's my weapon every time when it comes to fighting savages."

Goliath stiffened and straightened and was about to blast this defamer of his favorite weapon, when thinking better of it, the huge fellow turned to his bow and arrows and the fish again.

De Pont Brian and I stood there and watched, with ever growing admiration, that marvelous bowman strike fish after fish. Only twice did he miss out of some thirty shots and then but by a hairbreadth. But, presently, the fish appeared to take fright and swam rapidly away from the ship.

"Now, watch me and I'll show what I call good shooting with the long bow. See that old box bobbing up and down on the water some hundred yards away?" and Goliath pointed to where a wooden box, about two feet square, partly floated above the water. "Doubtless it was cast overboard by some fishermen going or coming from the coast of Newfoundland. Now, 'twill take a calculating eye and a strong arm to send a shaft into that box, as it dances about on the water. The bowman would have to take into account so many things—the movements of the ship on which the archer stood, the movements of the box itself, the distance, the wind and the strength of the bow, are but some of them. Aye, if I can send my arrow into that bobbing box, I'll account it good shooting. What say you?" and his eyes swept the circle of men.

"I'll say 'twould be the devil's own shooting!" answered one after eying the box and the distance for a moment. "It can't be done, Goliath."

"Aye, he be right, not even you can hit that dancing box at that distance," declared another, squinting at the box.

"But, I can try and, mayhap, hit it by trying," chuckled Goliath, drawing a fresh arrow from his quiver and carefully examining it to see that it was perfectly straight and that its feathers hung true to the shaft.

Then he gave the same attention to his bow, twanging its string and listening carefully to its humming and running his thumb and finger up and down its length; and then, doubtless feeling a frayed spot, he replaced it with a fresh string.

"Now, I be ready," he said; "and if I send not my shaft into yonder box, I give you warrant to account me a poor archer and not worthy to bear bow and quiver where there be true bowmen," and he placed the arrow on the string and drew it back until its head nigh touched the hand that grasped the bow. Then he planted his feet firmly on the deck and fixed his eyes on the box.

For, mayhap, ten seconds he stood thus, motionless as if his feet were bolted to the deck of the ship. Then the bow came up slowly and firmly until the arrow was level with his eyes; and, at that instant, he released the shaft and I heard the bowstring hum shrilly. I tried to follow the arrow with my eyes; but, so swift was its flight that I could not and I fixed my eyes on the box. To me it seemed as if it gave a sudden jerk, but, so tossed about was it by the restless waters, that I could not be certain and no arrow showed sticking in its side.

"A miss!" yelled a sailor. "A clean miss!"

"No!" cried another. "I saw the box jerk, when the shaft struck."

"I'll wager my month's pay that it was a clean miss," declared a third. "Who'll take me?"

"I," and the hand of the old sailor with the tattooing went up. "Goliath does not miss!"

But no other hand went up.

During this time the big bowman stood silent, a confident smile on his face.

"Yuon, you and De Pont Brian get into a boat and bring the box on board," came the voice of Captain Cartier and, somewhat to my surprise, I saw him push his way through the crowd of men and take his stand by the side of Goliath. "No one at this distance can make sure whether or no the arrow hit the box. Lower the dinghy for the two boys," he ordered, "Goliath, I never before saw such shooting with a bow as you have just done. Now, off with you," and he turned to De Pont Brian and me. "I am certain that Goliath hit the box and I want to prove that I am right."

The dinghy was quickly lowered and, in a few minutes more, we had rowed to the box. At first I could see no signs of the arrow.

"He—he did miss it!" I cried disappointedly.

"Wait, until we have examined the box," smiled Claude.

We lifted the box into the boat—and there was the arrow sticking into the underside of it! At sight of it, we both gave a joyous shout to notify those on board that Goliath had aimed true. Then we quickly started back for the ship.

"Say, Yuon, but that is a curious-looking box to find floating on the ocean hundreds of miles from land," Claude said, keeping questioning eyes on the box, as he rowed. "Looks as if it might have been in the water for years; yet it is so strongly made that it is still solid. Wonder what can be inside of it!"

"In truth, I am puzzled," I answered; for I had had

my eyes on the box and much the same thoughts had come to me as had come to Claude. For one thing the box was unbroken, an unusual circumstance in a box found adrift on the ocean. Then it appeared to have been made purposely to resist water for a long time by the use of some kind of hard wood that would not become water-logged nor rotten. Also it was protected by bands of some kind of metal that salt water did not rust and the nails with which it was fastened together seemed to be made out of the same kind of metal. Truly, I, too, began to wonder what might be in that box and what had kept it afloat for so long a time. But all such thoughts were soon cut short by our coming to the side of the ship.

There was a great shout of triumph for Goliath, when the box was lifted up on deck and laid at his feet, where all could see his arrow sticking into its side. Then all began to stare wonderingly at the box. It was not like the usual derelict box found on the ocean.

"Curious! Most curious!" I heard Captain Cartier mutter to himself, his eyes on the box.

Evidently he too was having much the same kind of thoughts regarding the box that De Pont Brian and I had had. Then, suddenly, he turned to the big bowman.

"Goliath," he ordered, "pick up that trophy of your bow and arrow and bear it to my cabin. I would examine it more carefully—away from these curious eyes," he added in an undertone. "Yuon, you and De Pont Brian come with us."

Goliath lifted the box up on one of his great shoulders and bore it to Captain Cartier's cabin, followed by the disappointed eyes of all who had gathered on deck, who, doubtless, had hoped that the box would be opened in front of them.

De Pont Brian and I hurried after Captain Cartier and Goliath; and the door of Captain Cartier's cabin soon closed behind us and the mysterious box.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CASKET OF QUETZALCOATL—I LEARN THE STRANGE FATE OF MY UNCLE

WHEN the door of Captain Cartier's cabin had shut behind us, Goliath set the box on the floor and stood staring curiously down at it.

"Looks as if it might contain a fortune in jewels for somebody, the way it is made and protected," he grinned. "If it does, I'm going to claim them. But, how in the name of the Seven Great Goblins! came that box out here in the middle of the North Atlantic, where few ships ever come? By my great bow! but it's got my curiosity going. Let's open her up?"

While he had been speaking Captain Cartier had secured a hammer and chisel; and he now came forward with these tools and bent over the box. He would allow no hands but his own to open it.

The box was about eighteen inches square and so astonishingly light for its size, that its very lightness greatly increased our curiosity. What could be in it? Why had it been so carefully protected?

"I'll wager the first barrelful of gold I find in the New World against yours, Yuon," laughed De Pont Brian a bit nervously, "that it's an artful cheat, gotten up to fool such foolish fellows as you and I and that it contains nothing more valuable than a sailor's old shirt. Take me?"

"Yes," I laughed back. "But——"

At this moment the top of the box gave a shrill shriek

of protest, as Captain Cartier pried it lose with the chisel and my words stopped on the end of my tongue and my eyes saw naught but the rising cover of the box. Another strong pry of the chisel and off came the whole cover—and all our eyes stared down at the open box in astoundment; for, as truly as I live, there, carefully spread over the top of the box, was an old torn and stained shirt!

"You win, Claude!" I shouted. "It is a shirt! Looks like a box full of laundry! You get the first barrelful of gold I find in the New World," and, even in that tense moment, I laughed at this strange happening, as did Captain Cartier and De Pont Brian; but Goliath let off a roar that came near bursting my ears.

"Oh! Ho, ho!" he roared. "De Pont Brian, the shirt, as well as the barrelful of gold, is yours. Here, take it!" and he bent quickly and jerked the shirt from off the top of the box and—dropped it and fell on his knees and began digging into the tightly packed pieces of cork that now appeared to fill the remainder of the box; and so tightly were they forced into their places that it was with difficulty we—we were all at it now—dug them out, even with the points of our knives.

Now we could understand why the box floated so lightly in the water; now we began to comprehend that there must be a good reason for that tightly packed cork, for that firmly made and strongly bound box.

The point of my knife was the first to strike something that I knew was not cork and a thrill went through every nerve in my body at the jar of that strike.

"I've hit something!" I cried excitedly.

"Careful! Careful!" warned Captain Cartier. "We know not what it is and must move carefully, lest we harm it. Out with the cork first!"

In two minutes we had enough of the cork out of the box to expose an oblong object, closely wrapped in a silk scarf and bound with a strong cord wound many times around it. In another minute Captain Cartier had the object out of the box, had cut the cord and unwrapped the silk—and held up on the broad palm of his hand, where all could see it, a small casket, the sight of which nearly caused our eyes to pop out of their sockets.

The casket was some six inches long by four inches wide and four inches high; and appeared to have been cut out of a solid greenish stone, capable of receiving a very high polish, possibly jade; and had many quaint figures and strange hieroglyphics inlaid in gold and tortoise-shell on its top and sides, which looked to be, to our unskilled eyes, of Aztec origin. In addition, on the center of the top was emblazoned a gold sun, shooting out thin rays of inlaid gold in all directions, very beautiful to behold; and so carefully had the casket been wrapped and protected that the sun still shone with untarnished luster.

For a moment I do not think that one of us breathed, so awed were we by such an unexpected find. Then a long indrawn breath of wonder and admiration came from the mouth of each.

"Mother of God!" exclaimed Captain Cartier. "What wonder is this? How came so glorious an object in that floating box?"

"'Tis fit for a king's jewel casket!" cried De Pont Brian. "But, of a certainty, no Christian king ever had a jewel casket adorned like this! Where could it have come from?"

"I once saw queer figures and strange marks somewhat like these on a small silver box that one of the

soldiers of Cortes brought back with him from Mexico. But, by all the holy saints! how came it in the middle of the North Atlantic? And how came my arrow to find it?" Goliath's voice was full of awe as he spoke and, when he ceased, I saw that his fingers were busy counting the beads of his rosary and that his lips were moving in prayer.

"But—but, open it! Open it, Captain Cartier!" I cried out, my tongue, in my excitement, getting beyond my control. "Open it and let us see what marvel this wondrous casket contains!"

Captain Cartier turned the box upside down and round about, but no keyhole could he find, no way of opening it. Then his thumb chanced to press down hard on the resplendent sun and the lid flew open; and we saw, folded so as to fit closely into the casket, a parchmentlike piece of paper. Captain Cartier's fingers trembled as he hastily lifted out this folded paper and laid it down on the table on which the box now rested.

Under the folded paper and embedded in soft silk lay a marvelous jewel, a great emerald cunningly cut in the form of a pyramid,[1] the base of which was nearly as large as the palm of my hand and the length of which was almost as long as the casket. The four sides of this pyramid were covered with strange-looking characters inlaid in gold and on its top sat a mystic deity, with ebon features, most quaintly carved, wearing a gold miter waving with tiny plumes as of fire, on his head, a collar of gold around his neck, pendant jewels in his ears, a jeweled scepter in one hand and a curiously

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[1] One of the jewels presented by Cortes to the King of Spain was said to have been an emerald, "of so extraordinary a size, that the base was as broad as the palm of the hand," according to William H. Prescott, the historian and author of *The Conquest of Mexico*.—E. M.

painted shield in the other. This image was not over an inch in height and yet so skilfully and delicately was it wrought that it appeared perfect to the eyes in the most minute particulars.[1] Around this pyramid and god, where they could be best fitted into the casket, were a number of beautifully cut and polished emeralds in the forms of butterflies and flowers and other precious stones and quaintly made trinkets of gold, the use of which I know not. Taken altogether, this casket and its contents, even as my inexperienced eyes could see, represented very great value, possibly the greatest value the eyes of man had ever seen in so small a compass.

"And all these marvelous jewels be mine, for it was my arrow that found them!" gasped Goliath. "I'll buy me a castle and live at my ease like a nobleman, with many maid- and man-servants to wait on me, once I come back to France. I——"

"Softly, softly, with thy dreaming, my huge friend," interrupted Captain Cartier. "Mayhap this paper makes other disposal of the jewels. I see writing on it and, strange to say, the writing is in French. Now, I'll have a look at the paper. Glory of the saints, but what a wondrous find this is!" and he picked up the paper, which had come from the casket, and began to unfold it.

Now, at the instant Captain Cartier's fingers touched this paper and began to unfold it, a sudden tensity of interest came into me that set my heart to palpitating wildly and caused me to take a quick step nearer to him and to fix my eyes on the paper, as if it might hold a message of life or death for me or other matter of the

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[1] Judging from the description given, this must have been an image of the ancient Mexicans' mystic deity, Quetzalcoatl, and the emerald pyramid a representation of the great sacred pyramid at Cholula, dedicated to this god.—E. M.

gravest concern. This I know has a strange sound, especially when taken in connection with what followed; and I have no explanation to give it, only that possibly the saints, who are given guard over us, do, at times, when matters of grave concern draw nigh us, whisper into the ears of our souls a warning of their approach; and we feel, without understanding why, as if some marvel, which deeply concerns us, was about to happen, even as I felt when Captain Cartier picked up that piece of folded parchment. Mayhap, the priests can make this clear. I cannot. I can only set down the matter as it actually happened.

When the paper was unfolded Captain Cartier began to read it and to himself, which provoked our impatience greatly; and, as he read, so intense became his interest that many expressions of wonderment and astoundment came from his lips; and once he paused to look at me and to ask: "Had your father a brother, Yuon?"

"Yes—yes!" I answered, greatly excited. "He had a younger brother, a wild one, with the love of adventure and the sea deep within him. He ran away from home when about my age and has never been heard from since. It is thought he went to sea and perished—But—but, what has this wild brother of my father, my Uncle Hugh, whom I never saw, to do with this parchment and those glorious jewels? Read the parchment aloud, I pray you?"

But Captain Cartier continued to read to himself, his interest and wonderment increasing with every word he read, until he came to the end, giving no attention to our complaints. Then, with a great wonder on his face and in his eyes, he turned to me.

"Yuon," he said, "this is the most marvelous happen-

ing, the most wondrous tale, that hath ever come to my knowledge; and I do think that truly this box was guided hither, where the arrow of Goliath could find it, by the very hands of the good saints themselves, who go with us to the uttermost parts of the earth."

By now, as you may well believe, we were all greatly excited over what that parchment might contain and I most of all. Truly, the heat of my interest became so great that I could no longer hold it inside of me.

"Give me that paper, give it to me quickly," I cried; "for I am most certain that it concerns me and I would read it!" and I reached out my hand for the parchment.

"Aye, aye, read it Yuon, first-born son of the Chevalier de Valour, read it and bless the blessed saints for bringing it thus miraculously to thy hands. 'Twill make glad the heart of thy father," and he handed the parchment to me.

"Read it aloud, Yuon, for the love of the martyred saints, read it aloud, lest I die of unrequited curiosity," begged De Pont Brian.

I took the parchment and read it aloud; and this is what I read:

"To my dearly beloved father, or, if he be dead, to my loved brother, Lauren, first-born son of my father, greetings:

"I must write what I write quickly; for the end cometh on apace and there is no hope of rescue in this cold north land of ice and snow. Our ship lieth helpless, fast-bound in so great a mass of ice that it were hopeless to think of getting her out into the free water again, ere we be dead from starvation, or from being crushed by the awful heavings of this great sea of ice, whose mighty jaws doth constantly open up and come together again, with hideous groanings and the crash of many thunders,

crushing all that lieth betwixt them, though it be a great ship, as if it were but the egg of a hen. For three weeks we have thus been made prisoners by the ice. Before that we were driven by the storm-devils northward, ever northward, for many days, until, with ship crippled and nigh helpless, we came to this strange land of cold gray fogs that chill the very marrow in the bones, where there be veritable mountains of ice afloat in the water, to the great peril of ships, and where a red and dying sun gives forth a sickly light. And now, with our ship frozen fast in the ice and our food near exhaustion and not another eatable thing, bird, or beast, fish or plant, within our ken, we face a most horrible death by slow starvation, or a sudden ending by the opening of the ice jaws and the grinding betwixt them of ship and all, and then the great gulp of the ocean—God have mercy on our souls!

"With this certain death before me, my thoughts have turned homeward, to the grave of my deeply mourned mother, God rest her soul! to my dear father, the saints shield and guard him! to my brother, to the old town of St. Malo, with her grim walls of rock ever frowning seaward; and, with these thoughts, there hath come the thought of how time hath dealt somewhat harshly with the estate of my father; and how I had that in my possession, wherewith estates greater than he hath ever dreamed of might be purchased, could I but bethink me of a way to get it to him, after I am dead.

"Now, after much thinking on the matter, a way hath come to me, wherein lieth a faint possibility of success; and, not being able to think of a better and being hard pressed for time, I have determined to try this way and to trust my treasure to the mercies of the merciless waves, to the wide-reaching hands of the sea, with a prayer to the blessed saints, who, I am assured,

ever keep watch and ward over us, to protect and so guide it that it cometh at length into the hands of one of my family. Therefore, have I made me this stout and seaworthy box and will place therein my treasure, closely packed in cork to keep it afloat and to protect it from the water; and I will seal it tightly and will nail it with brass nails and will bind it with brass straps, for brass rusts not in salt water.

"Thus having done, when the last flicker of hope dieth down inside of me and goeth out, like the blaze of a burnt-out candle, I will place the box, thus prepared, on the ice, some little distance from the ship, and give it in trust to the saints, in the hope that, when the year turns round and the summer's sun melts the ice, the box will float on the water to where some sailor will see it and rescue it and will, according to the instructions therein given, carry the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the jewels therein and this parchment, in all honor, to my father or to whosoever stands in his place at the head of my family. Alas, that even death should rob me of so great a treasure!

"May the dread curse of Haitzilopotchli,[1] of Tezcatlipocal,[2] of Tlaloc,[3] who are the most terrible and the most powerful gods of the Aztecs, fall upon and rot the bones and the flesh, and dry up the heart, and shrivel up the skin of him, who, finding and opening this box, bears not the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and all therein, straightway to the Chevalier de Valour, in the seaport town of St. Malo, which lieth on the coast of France. And, be it known, that, of a certainty, this curse

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[1] The Aztec god of war.—E. M.

[2] According to the Aztec religion, a god only inferior to the Supreme Being, called 'the Soul of the World.'—E. M.

[3] The Aztec god of rain.—E. M.

of the Mexican gods, of all the curses known to mankind, is the most powerful and most sure of fulfilment. Once lying flat on my face, in adoration; once kneeling, in humbleness; once standing, to shew that I am a man, have I repeated this curse and invoked the three dread gods to the witnessing thereof and to the fulfilment of its provisions. May God have mercy on the soul of him who disregards it! I, who know, write this.

"Now, before I place all in the casket and the casket in the box and make ready the box for the leaving of it on the ice, there be one matter that must be made clear, for the good of mine own honor and for the peace of mind of those who, mayhap, still remember and love me and would respect my memory, and that be how came I, but a soldier in the brave army of Cortes, possessed of so wondrous and so valuable a prize as the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and its marvelous jewels? This is the tale of it. At the time I ran away from home, overmastered by love of the sea and love of adventure, it so happened that, in every port I entered, there came to my ears wild tales of that wondrous New World, so recently discovered, of its strange peoples, of its riches in gold and jewels, of the many odd and exciting adventures to be had on its shores, until the heat engendered by this telling began to boil so hotly in my blood that I needs must go adventuring thither. In this the gods of adventure favored me; for, when Cortes and his army set sail for the Conquest of Mexico, I was with them, with them when they fought and marched their way from the coast to the City of Mexico, with them when they entered the city and were welcomed by the emperor, Montezuma, as if they were gods——

"But time presses—Our captain has just now told us that we have food to keep us alive but for three days

longer, that a great crack has just split the ice not three hundred yards from the ship, with a great noise and heaving of the ice all around us. In very truth, as I write this, I can still feel the heaving of the ice. Therefore must I get me quickly to my purpose, must get me to that night, that awful night of horror and death, when Cortes, driven by despair of otherwise saving himself and army, determined to attempt secretly to flee the city.

"At midnight all was in readiness for our going. Cortes ordered the gates of the palace thrown open. A drizzling rain fell from a cloud-covered sky. A gloomy darkness engulfed all. Silently we marched out through the great gates, fearful of awakening the terrible Aztec warriors. The huge square in front of the palace was deserted. Not an Aztec was to be seen nor heard. For this we praised the saints. We entered on the great street of Tlacopan and marched along it in silence. The city lay dark, silent and mysterious all around us. I shivered in dread of what this dark silence might portend. At length we came to the great causeway of Tlacopan, on which this street enters; for you must know that the City of Mexico is built on an island,[1] *with great causeways leading from it to the mainland. Suddenly I saw that the Aztecs had stationed sentinels here. The sentinels saw us and, in great alarm, fled, shouting their warning cries. The priests, keeping their night-watch on the summit of the near-by pyramid, heard their warning shouts and instantly sounded their trumpet-shells. The great drum in the temple of the*

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[1] The City of Mexico, at this date, 1520, was built on an island, situated in Lake Tezcuco. Since then the lake has been drained and the water filled in until now the shores of this lake are some miles from the city.—E. M.

war-god on top of the pyramid, sent its thunderous notes vibrating throughout every part of the city. In a moment it had aroused the whole city and sent the people swarming into the streets. Now a dread and distant sound, the like of which I had never heard before, began throbbing in my ears, a sound as of mighty winds and rain sweeping through a thick-leaved forest. The armies of a great nation were marching upon us! At first came a tempest of stones and arrows, ever coming faster and faster, ever becoming more and more deadly. Then, like a swirling tornado, the Aztec warriors themselves leaped forth to do battle with us. They poured in from all directions, from the lake on both sides of the causeway, from the front and from the rear, leaping and shouting and whirling and hurling their weapons as they came. Not in my wildest and most dreadful nightmares did fancy ever paint a more horrible scene than this charging horde of furious warriors made. They dashed their canoes against the sides of the causeway, leaped from them and flung themselves upon us, upon the horses and their riders and attempted to pull down both horses and riders and kill the men or make them captives. We slew them by the thousands; but they had no fear of wounds, no dread of death itself. Where one fell, three leaped into his place.

"The Spaniards fought like madmen. Hands and arms and corselets ran with blood. No one thought of surrender; for all knew that to yield was to be borne away to the stone of sacrifice, to have their living hearts torn from their bosoms by the priests and offered up, still hot and throbbing, to their war-god, the dreadful Huitzilopotchli. The horror of such a fate, made all court death, rather than capture.

"The gloom of that dark night, the drizzling rain,

the terrible crush of fighting men on that narrow causeway, whereon not more than twenty men could march abreast, the jam of struggling boatsful of warriors on both sides of the causeway, all rushing to join in the battle, the horrible cries and shouts and groans of the fighting and the dying that filled our ears—God, I cannot describe that scene of horror! But still we fought on; for there was yet something more dreadful than death by fighting—the sacrificial block of jasper, the priest with his razor-like knife of itztli.[1]

"Thus fighting, bleeding, dying we made our slow and bloody way along that dreadful causeway, throughout that night of gloom and blood and horror; and, when the gray of morning came, we still fought on—all that were left of us. But now we had come near to the mainland, to the end of the causeway, to our last great fight before we reached the safety of the shore. I, by some miracle, so far had received no serious hurt, though my armor was dented and rent and my sword hacked and its point broken off—But there is no time to tell of my own fights and no need, save only of one, and to that I now come.

"The Aztecs had made a breach in the causeway, just before it reached the mainland; and when I, now with the foremost ranks of the Spaniards, came to this unbridged space of water, jammed with the boats of Aztec warriors, I saw at once that here would be our big fight, bigger and more terrible than any that had gone before; for we must cross that water and that speedily—and we had no bridge nor the wherewithal to build one!

"Now it was that I saw a man on horseback dash up

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[1] A volcanic glass, hard and keen-edged as steel.—E. M.

to the edge of the breach. He was a splendid figure of a man, an officer and most certainly a Spanish grandee. This I knew by the glory of his armor and dress and the rich caparison of his horse, though armor and dress and caparison were now all dented and hacked and red with blood. He pulled up his horse at the very edge of the breach and looked, for a moment, at the unbridged water, at the Aztecs crowding its surface in their boats. Then he turned himself in his saddle, his sword held high.

"'Spaniards,' he shouted, 'for the glory of God and Country and King, we must into the breach and fill it with our bodies, so that those who follow can cross over them in safety to the mainland. 'Tis death, if we do; 'tis death, if we don't! Now, who will die with me for the glory of God and Country and King and the salvation of the few that will remain?'

"I thought he looked a most glorious figure, as he shouted these words. But scarce were they bravely out of his mouth, when a boat shot up against the broken end of the causeway; and six Aztec warriors, led by a giant of a man, armed with a great club, spiked with points of itztli, *leaped out of it and up the bank and flung themselves upon horse and man. They wound their arms around the legs and neck of the horse, around the legs and body of the man, albeit he fought most valiantly and slew two of them. The giant dropped his club and, leaping up, threw his great arms around the body of the man; and horse and man went to the ground. I heard their dread shouts of triumph.*

"'To the sacrifice with him! The knives are sharpened! They hunger for his coming! He is a great leader. He will die a great death! To the stone of sacrifice with him!' they cried.

"I saw the huge leader throw his now partly stunned victim over one shoulder, as if he were a child, catch up his club and start toward the boat.

"Then I think I must have gone mad with rage at the thought of that splendid man being borne away to the Aztec stone of sacrifice, to the knives of the priests; for I killed one of the two Aztecs, who, at this moment, threw themselves upon me, with a thrust of my broken sword through his naked body, and ran to his rescue. The giant's back was toward me and, as I ran, I leaped up, my sword held high, and swung it downward, with every ounce of strength in my body back of it. Straight down on top of the giant's head came the edge of the blade and cleaved the head in two from scalp to chin; but, so great a hold of life have these Aztecs, that, as he fell, he still had strength to strike the Spanish grandee with the club; and, so powerful was the blow, that it made a great wound in his back with its sharp points, even through his corselet of steel. I saw that his life was gushing forth from his wound, as I bent over him.

" 'Here, quick!' he cried. 'Underneath my corselet thou wilt find—Take it. It is thine. I give it thee. Thou —thou hath—hath saved me from—knives—priests—,' and he was dead.

"I thrust my hand quickly under the bulging bosom of his corselet, for that was not the time to indulge in sentiment, and pulled out this wondrous casket and the marvelous jewels that are in it, albeit I knew it not then, for the casket was wrapped in silk and I gave it but a glance and thrust it under the bosom of my own corselet and thought no more of it at that time; for now I must fight, if I lived. A dozen Aztec warriors had thrown themselves upon me.

" 'He killed the Big One!' they cried. 'To the stone of sacrifice with him! To the knives of the priests!'

"And, albeit I killed three of them, they seized me and——

"At this moment, a great roaring and crashing and crunching deafens my ears and the timbers of the ship groan, like a thing with life, and the ship itself shivers and lurches and heaves——

"Remember that dread CURSE! It is most powerful and most certain! It——

"I can hear the captain shouting, 'All on deck! The ship is going!——'

"Will hurry everything into the casket and the casket into the box and pack in the cork and——"

Here the parchment ended abruptly; and, as it ended, in fancy, I could hear the awful crash and crunching, as the ice closed in upon the doomed ship. The disjointed words told so vividly the tale of the sudden opening of the ice jaws and the crushing of the ship and all in it, that I was all of a tremble with the excitement of it, when I laid down the parchment on the table by the side of the Casket of Quetzalcoatl.

CHAPTER IX

A FEARFUL STORM AT NIGHT—ALMOST MUTINY

I DO not think that one of us spoke for two minutes after I had finished the reading of the parchment, so horrified had we been by its ending and the awful picture that ending left in our imaginations. Then Captain Cartier bowed his head and made the sign of the cross on his bosom.

"God have mercy on his soul! God have mercy on all their souls!" he said.

"God have mercy on all their souls!" we repeated and bowed our heads and so remained for another two minutes in silent prayer.

Now I know not whether or no my uncle placed the box in safety on the ice. How could I? But in some miraculous manner the box was saved; and, unharmed by tossing waves and crunching ice and Arctic storms, it was borne, in the fulness of time, to the exact spot on the broad Atlantic, where the eyes of Goliath could see it and at the right moment for his arrow to strike it and bring it safely to the hands of one of our family.

Truly, my Uncle Hugh's prayer to the saints to guard well the box and bring it safely to the hands of one of his own family, had been answered in a most wonderful manner. Never again will I doubt the goodness and power of the saints, nor their watchful care over us, though we be in the wild places of the earth.

"But I would know how he escaped the stone of

sacrifice and the knives of the priests," mourned De Pont Brian, when our prayers to the dead were said. "Ah, but that battle on the causeway was a most glorious fight! I would that I might have been with the Spaniards!"

"And I," I broke in, for my soul had caught fire at his words. "But I have read that Cortes had been most cruel and false to the Aztecs and well deserved all that they did to him and his army on that *Noche Triste*, 'The Melancholy Night,' as I have heard the Spaniards still call it.

Now, while Claude and I were thus talking, I saw that the face of Captain Cartier had become unusually sober and thoughtful and that his eyes went often to the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the jewels, which now lay on the table by its side. Suddenly he started, stepped quickly to the door of his cabin and locked and bolted it. Then his eyes went swiftly to the one window of the three through which one outside could look into the room. Its curtain was up and he sprang to it and jerked it down.

"I pray God that no spying eyes have looked in on us through that window and seen the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the jewels," he said anxiously, as he turned from the window. "I have a crew of rough men, some of them came from jails; and, for the value of those wonderful jewels, they would murder every honest man on board and turn pirate. We must not let another soul know what was in that box. On our lives, we must keep the presence of the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the jewels an absolute secret. You promise me this, De Pont Brian, Yuon, Goliath, on your honor as Frenchmen?"

"I do," we each answered, for, with such a crew on board, we saw at once the necessity of secrecy.

"I, with your permission, Yuon," continued Captain Cartier, "will keep the casket and the jewels hidden here, in a secret cupboard that I have in my cabin, until we return to France, when you can place them in the hands of your father. But, in the meantime, we must be most careful to see to it that not a suspicion of the real contents of the box enters the mind of anyone on board our three ships. We four alone must know of them. And to guard against any such suspicions, we will take the box and fill it with the cork and lay on top of the cork, as if we had found it imbedded in the midst of the cork, a skin bag filled with false gold,[1] which I found in the New World on my First Voyage thither and which I still chance to have with me; and we will place in this bag, along with the false gold, a bit of this old parchment, on which one of us has written something, it matters not what, with a point of charred coal; and then we will shake the bag until the rubbing together of its contents has made the writing unreadable, save here and there a word. This done we will take the box and all on deck and show it to the men. Then we will all have a great laugh over our 'treasure'. I am confident this will allay their suspicions and explain how the box came to be afloat on the ocean. They will think that some poor devil fancied he had discovered gold in the New World and was probably returning home with some of it, when the thought of disaster at sea had caused him to safeguard the gold in the box; and that the blurred writing was to tell the finder, should the owner be lost at sea, where and to whom to

[1] The early explorers in what is now Canada frequently mistook iron pyrites or fools' gold, for real gold, as many other men in all parts of the world have done before and since.—E. M.

deliver the gold. Then had come disaster to him. What think you of my plan?"

We thought it a good plan and said so; and we put it to the test at once.

The men received our tale of the box and the finding of the "treasure" with roars of laughter at our expense, as we had hoped they would; but a few of the men were suspicious of the falseness of the gold and thought that it might be real gold. Then Captain Cartier explained to them how the false gold could be told from the true and proved that that which was in the bag was false; and then, to show his own conviction of the certainty of the proof, he tossed the bag of false gold overboard, as a thing of too little value to be kept, which, in truth, it was.

"There go all my fine dreams of living like a great nobleman, with men- and maid-servants to wait on me, while I take my ease in my big castle!" grinned Goliath, as the sound of the splash, when the bag hit the water, reached our ears.

The men laughed loudly at Goliath's remark and now seemed completely satisfied with our explanations of the box and its contents and we heard no more from them either of the box or the "treasure," save when one of them made a joking reference to it, which was always at our expense. But later—but that "but" belongs to another part of the tale and I must not write it down here, out of its place.

So far we had been troubled by few storms, which Captain Cartier said was unusual in this part of the Atlantic; but, shortly after the happening of the remarkable incidents just recorded, the ocean appeared to grow angry at our presuming to venture where it had long reigned in lonely supremacy, unvexed by ships and

men. The skies clouded over, the rain fell nearly every day and frequently the wind blew violently, or violent it seemed to me, who was but a landsman; and storms of rain and sleet and even snow followed one after the other.

Nathless, time passed very pleasantly with me during these stormy days of sailing, sailing ever westward. I marvelled at the bigness of the water. Day after day passed, even weeks, and still we sailed on and on, with nothing but that immensity of rolling, tumbling, tossing waters all around us. And ever the great mystery of the ocean enthralled and held me. Whence came all this water? What held it in bounds, even when its waters were torn and lifted and hurled about by a mighty wind. Never could the wind quite conquer; and, always, when the wind retreated from the unequal contest and slunk howling below the horizon, the ocean, after a time of quieting its foaming, white-maned war-horses, became the same calm old ocean again, without the loss of a jot or tittle of its power, without a wound showing of its great battle, ready to begin again its fierce and never-ending strife with the winds.

I came to love these battles (I called them) betwixt the winds of the skies and the waters of the ocean, that is, I did so long as they did not threaten the very lives of ourselves and ships. I thought it a most grand sight to watch the marshaling of the great waves, to behold them rolling relentlessly onward, wave following wave, for all the world like the disciplined ranks of white-maned, foam-flecked war-horses. I loved to listen to the wind shouting its war-cries and yelling its defiance to the waves through the sails and spars and rigging of the ship; and, if it chanced that at the same time there came vivid flashes of lightning across blue-black clouds

and the crash and roar of thunder and great sheets of rain pounding on the sails and on the deck and in my face and against the clothes on my body, so much the better for my enjoyment; and in all this De Pont Brian took equal pleasure with me.

The nearer we came to that mysterious New World, the greater grew our longing to cast anchor on its shores, to see its wild inhabitants and monstrous animals, to traverse its mighty rivers and forests, to climb its great hills and mountains, to make startling discoveries at which the world would marvel, to have thrilling and novel adventures under strange circumstances —Aye, the very thought of these things stirred our blood until it leaped in our veins.

"Truly, Yuon, 'twill be a great day for us, when we first set foot on this New World," De Pont Brian said at one of these times, as we stood in the prow of the ship looking westward. "Possibly we will discover something of great importance to the world. Mayhap, that much-sought-for way to the orient; or have some river or lake or mountain named after us and thereby win honor and glory for ourselves and a place for our names that time will not destroy. Aye, Yuon, this be a wonderful world in which we live! And never did two youths embark on a more wonderful adventure!"

"All that, mayhap, be true," I answered; "but what if we come not back again to enjoy the fruits of our adventuring?"

"It matters not much whether or no we come back," he quickly replied. " 'Tis the willingness, the glorious spirit of adventuring all, win or lose, that matters most; for thereby all great achievements are accomplished; and thus must this New World be won by the brave and adventurous. Think, think, Yuon, we be

among the first, the very first, to embark upon this greatest of adventures!"

Now as I go back in memory to those days, after many years, during which I have grown old in adventuring, I can but think of what a wonderful thing this glorious spirit of youth is! How bravely it adventures all! How courageously it endures defeat, as well as triumph! How gloriously it dares big things, at sight of which age would tremble and hesitate! I would that I were a youth again! That, I think, is the longing in every old heart, as it is in mine, now that I, too, am old.

We also talked sometimes, in low tones, when we were alone in our cabin and when we knew there were no listening ears, of that marvelous Casket of Quetzalcoatl and its wondrous jewels. Sometimes, in the quiet and safety of the night, we three, De Pont Brian, Goliath and I, went to the cabin of Captain Cartier and he, after locking and bolting door and darkening windows, brought out the Casket and laid it on the table under the light and opened it before us. And always we marveled at the wondrous emerald Pyramid, with the jeweled god sitting calmly on its top, and at the glory of the other jewels; and I dreamed dreams of what my father and I would do with all the gold this treasure would bring us—But, it is not well to count your chickens ere they're hatched, as an old saying hath it, and the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the jewels were not yet back in France and in the hands of my father! But that, too, is a later story.

Now we came to a region of great storms. A tempest of wind blew almost every day and in a direction contrary to our sailing. In addition to these troubles, great clouds of fog settled over the waters all around us; and, so thick and heavy was it that ofttimes we could

not see the length of our own ship, even at midday; and the wet wind became so chilled with the cold, that it went to our skins, no matter how warmly we clothed ourselves. Thus we were buffeted about by the winds and the waves in the dreadful semi-darkness of the fog, until our condition became most desperate and only the marvelous seamanship and courage of Captain Cartier saved us from utter destruction. I wondered no longer at the great fame his seamanship and courage had brought him; and my own and De Pont Brian's admiration of him grew apace.

Then came that dreadful night, black and wet with a thick fog; when the wind blew up such great waves that every timber in our brave ship shivered and strained as they struck her, sending floods of water sweeping over our decks. Verily, I thought she would go down at every blow of the waves! But it put hope and courage into my heart to see how courageously Captain Cartier fronted the storm and the darkness, fought the wind and the waves and so managed his ship that always she came forth triumphant over the wind and the water.

In the midst of this storm and darkness we lost sight of our two other ships. Not even a glimmer of their lanthorns could we see; and I wondered anxiously how it had fared with them. In the morning the wind had driven away the fog and the storm's fury had swept on its way eastward. The moment De Pont Brian and I came on deck, our eyes went anxiously to the still unquiet waters of the ocean in search of the two ships.

"They are gone! Both are gone!" I cried out in horror, at the first sweep of my eyes over the surface of the surrounding water, for not a sail of any kind could I see anywhere.

"But it might be that they have only become sep-

arated from us in the storm and the black darkness of last night and will find us again later. It was a terrible night!" answered De Pont Brian. "What think you, Captain Cartier?" and he turned quickly to our captain, whose great anxiety for his two ships had driven him on deck with the first light of morning, albeit he had scarcely got himself into bed after his successful struggle with the storm.

"I am sure you are right," Captain Cartier replied, with a confident smile. "I know Marc Jalobert. Not a better seaman ever sailed out of St. Malo. He loves his ship as he loves his wife. I am confident we will find him and his *Little Herminia* awaiting us at the appointed rendezvous, if they do not show up sooner. As for the *Hermerillon*, we will find her watching over the *Little Herminia*, like an older sister. You couldn't separate those two ships no more than you could two sisters. They'd stick together, even through such a storm as that of last night; and, if the storm won, they'd go down together, with their arms around each other, like two lovers," and Captain Cartier chuckled over his little conceit.

Nathless I could see, despite his apparent confidence, that the disappearance of the two ships troubled him greatly and that he spoke thus cheerily of the matter for the ears of his men, who might become so disheartened as to refuse to go farther, should they discover that he believed the two ships and all on board had gone down. In truth, that very night, the more ignorant of the ship's crew, and they were by far the majority, summoned Captain Cartier to a meeting on deck, underneath the Great Lanthorn.

You may be sure that De Pont Brian and I went to that meeting. When we got there, we found nearly all

the ship's crew already there, even some who should have been doing duty. Captain Cartier had not yet arrived. Most of the men looked ugly and rebellious, as if the great storm and the black night, through which they had just passed, had put an awesome fear of this strange region of cold and fog and storms into their very hearts. Some were talking excitedly together when we came; but they instantly lowered their voices at sight of us. This I thought ominous.

"I think Captain Cartier will have to do some wild beast taming this night," I whispered to De Pont Brian.

"And he'll do the taming, if there be need," he whispered back.

I could see that the men were becoming uneasy at the non-appearance of Captain Cartier. Already he was a good half-hour over due. They began to show their teeth, to growl angrily and threateningly. Then, suddenly, all who were talking became silent.

I turned to see what this meant. Captain Cartier was approaching. He wore his full uniform, as general of the fleet. Directly behind him strode his body-guard, Goliath. I noted, with a little thrill, that the giant carried his great bow and a quiver full of long arrows and had in his belt his long knife, which, I vow, had a blade fully a foot long and was of a most ugly shape. Behind Goliath came the ship's officers. Straight into the midst of the men gathered under the Great Lanthorn walked our captain, looking not to the right nor to the left, and took his station directly underneath the light. So far he had not spoken a word, no one had spoken a word. He had not looked at the men. Now, when he stood under the Great Lanthorn, he slowly turned himself around, and, as he turned, his eyes fixed themselves

for a moment on the face of each one of the men. Still he spoke no word.

I could see that this silence made the men most uneasy. The strong mastery he held over himself seemed to lessen their mastery over themselves. Mayhap, this was the effect he sought to produce. Suddenly he stopped in his turning and his hand shot out and pointed straight at one of the men.

"Golet, what do you here?" he demanded. "How dared you desert your watch on the fore-deck? Master Frosmont," and he turned peremptorily to his chief master,[1] who stood near him, "take Golet below and put the irons on him. I'll have no man on board my ships deserting his watch and thus endangering the lives of all on board the ship. Take him below, Master Frosmont, and put him in irons—at once. I'll deal with him later."

Golet, at first, looked as if he were going to defy Captain Cartier. The red hair on his head bristled, like the hair on the back of an angry dog. He turned his eyes defiantly on the face of his captain. Their eyes met, held for an instant, and then Golet's eyes went to the floor of the deck. The others looked sullenly on, but spoke no words and made no move.

Our captain had asserted his mastery; and Master Frosmont clapped hand on the arm of Golet and led him away, without opposition on his part or from any there present—and Golet had been one of the leaders!

"Now, my men, what would you with me?" Captain Cartier spoke quietly, in the same tone of voice he ordinarily used when addressing his men. "Why have you summoned me to this meeting under the Great Lanthorn? Speak freely. I listen."

[1] First mate.—E. M.

For a minute or two no one spoke. They looked to me like sullen school boys expecting reproof from their teacher, yet not repenting of their misdeeds, albeit all were men grown and some of them old. I thought I saw fear, a great dread back of their sullenness.

Then that same old sailor, he of whom I have afore written as the man with the much tattooing on his bared arms and bosom, came up slowly on his feet, twisting his sailor's cap with both hands as he faced Captain Cartier. He had not been one of the loud talkers before the coming of our captain. These were all silent now and stood looking at the old sailor, as if they were most willing to suffer him to do their talking. The old sailor hesitated, still continuing to twist his cap.

"What is it, Colas?" and Captain Cartier bent his eyes on the face of the man. "Speak freely. I am listening."

Then Colas seemed to take courage from his fears and his eyes turned and searched the surface of the ocean.

"Captain Cartier," he said, speaking slowly, "there be no sails in sight on the ocean, where there should be two good ships. We would know what has become of our sister ships and our good comrades. We be afeared they have gone down into this evil sea, the ships and the men, all gone down. Last night we saw lights, sickly looking little blue lights, dancing atop our mast-heads, dancing along our spars, lights which came and went in a most curious and unholy manner. As all sailors know, these blue lights be lights of warning. In the midst of the fury of the storm and the black fog, we heard moanings, great moanings and most fearful cries and shrieks, as of dreadful and mighty evil things crying out in triumph; and the lights, those sickly blue lights,

flared up brightest, when the moanings and the cries grew loudest.

"Captain, we be afeared of these evil waters, afeared of the heavy black fog, which goeth into our bones like a death-chill, afeared of the cold storms, which come down on us from out the north, roaring monster-like. Captain, we be good men and true and brave to face dangers whereof we know and have good faith in you as our leader and would follow you to the death; but this be a region of blackness and cold and mystery, wherein do live demons and evil monsters, who want us not here and who will devour us and our ship, if we go farther forward, even as they already have devoured our comrades and their two ships. We fear not death; but we want not that hideous kind of death. Therefore, we have summoned you here underneath the ship's Great Lanthorn to beg that you turn from this evil region, while we yet live." His twisted cap fell from his twisting hands and he did not stoop to pick it up; but stood with eyes fixed intently on Captain Cartier's face. "Captain, wilt turn ship about and go from this evil place?"

"And forego this great adventure! And win naught but dishonor from so great an undertaking!" There was scorn in the tone of Captain Cartier, a scorn which deepened as he went on. "Turn about ship, because we be afeared of storms and cold and fog and blue lights dancing on mast-tops and the sounds of great winds battling with great waves! Man, how could one of us ever dare to face the seamen of St. Malo again, did we do that cowardly thing! They would disown us! Would drive us from the town, as a shame to all true seamen! They——"

"But, where be the two ships, Captain, and all our

good comrades?" broke in a sailor, standing near Colas, his large brass earrings glimmering in the light.

"Aye, aye, we ask you where be they?" called a third. "Two good ships and men, all swallowed up in one night, with the blue lights a-dancing and the wind a-roaring. 'Twill be us next, Captain, sobeit we sail farther on this evil sea, where we know not what demons await us. I, too, say turn ship about while we yet live."

"Never did I think to hear seamen from St. Malo talks such foolishness!" and Captain Cartier laughed.

"They be afeared the demons will eat them alive, Captain," said Goliath, who stood a little back of our captain. "Mayhap, if we but cover their bellies with iron and put iron pots atop their heads, 'twill give them bravery to go up against the teeth of the demons; or do the teeth of these demons crunch iron as if it were but bread crusts? What say you men?" and Goliath laughed loudly.

But now the men grew sullen and demanded that the ship be turned about, one after another crying out this demand and affirming that they had not been shipped to sail where demons first wrapped them about with a thick cold fog, the like of which no man of them had ever seen before; and then swallowed all, ships and men, down in one great gulp.

How might one reason against such superstition and ignorance? Yet Captain Cartier kept tight hold on his patience, saying that the two ships had but become separated from them in the storm and the darkness and would, of a certainty, show up again at the Bay of Castles, where it had been agreed betwixt them, that, should the ships become separated by storms or otherwise, they would foregather at this place and there

await the coming of one another. He laughed at their fears of demons, showing how such fears were an offense to God and shamed their manhood. Finally, after talking long and bravely with them and, withal, most patiently, and shaming them of their fears, he so far won them, without resorting to any harsh measures, that they promised to abide our coming to the Bay of Castles; and then, if the two ships came not in a reasonable time, he agreed, on his part, to turn about and go back to France, sobeit that was still their wish.

I thought it most unlike Captain Cartier to bind himself to any agreement wherein was any turning back and so thought De Pont Brian; but, when we made query of him, for the thought of turning back without our great adventure accomplished troubled us, he laughed.

"I know my seamen," he said. "Once we get beyond this region of storms and fogs and anchor safe within the Bay of Castles, with the New World and its unknown promises and adventures lying, as it were, at our feet, there will be none wanting to turn back, no, not one, even though the two ships come not. Sailormen be a peculiar folk: adventurous, superstitious, unreasoning, giving credence to all manner of incredible tales, believing in sights and wonders, yet brave, even to foolhardiness, sobeit the danger be one they know and can see; but most foolishly afeared of wonders, and marvels, and dead men's bones, and ghost-like sounds—anything mysterious and incomprehensible to their minds. Now, mark my words, when they come safe to this New World, when they see its land, though it be but an island, there will be no more thoughts in them of going back. So, let not thoughts of our turning back afore the Great Adventure for which we came is accomplished, trouble your souls. You shall have your adventure—

mayhap, more than your fill of it! Aye, I know my seamen!" and Captain Cartier turned from us, chuckling, as was his wont, when well-pleased with himself.

I could but marvel at the skill with which our captain had handled this matter, which, at one time, looked big with ruin for our great enterprise.

CHAPTER X

WE COME TO THE ISLAND OF BIRDS

NOW, after the going of that Big Storm, the weather became more prosperous for us, as if the winds had become discouraged by their great defeat, the fogs lay less heavily on the waters around us and our sullen and fearful seamen began to forget their fears and discontent and spoke no more of turning back, nor even of the two missing ships and their comrades. This I thought somewhat strange, seeing that we caught no sight of their sails. Mayhap, shame for their past fears, which had now been proven both foolish and false, kept their tongues silent. Aye, Captain Cartier knew his seamen!

Thus, once again all things on board our ship assumed their wonted routine, save now that we were drawing nigh to the New World, there came to all the feel of a great, but subdued, excitement. Even the ship itself appeared to catch something of this excitement; for to me the sounds of the wind in its sails had in them something like excited whisperings. Each time I looked across the landless water I felt a thrill of most wonderful and delightsome expectancy go through me. A new world, an unknown world, filled with what strange adventure! what marvelous sights! what opportunities to win honor and glory lay almost at my very hand!

De Pont Brian and I spent nearly all our idle time on deck, looking for a first sign of the New World; and each night, afore we lay down in our bunks, one of us

was quite sure to say to the other: "On the morrow it might be that we will come to one of the islands of the New World of which Captain Cartier has told us." This we did despite the fact that we well knew the islands were still days of sailing away. I know not why we did this thing, save that when we are young we do many foolish things, without knowing or caring for any wherefores. Then, at length, came the morning of July 7th, 1535! That is one of the dates I shall never forget!

When De Pont Brian and I came on deck on this morning, we found Captain Cartier already there, standing with Chief-Master Frosmont on the foredeck. Both were looking anxiously, but with triumphant expectancy, straight across the water ahead of them. Almost at the moment we saw them, both gave a start, bent eagerly forward and, with their hands shading their eyes, stared intently into the slightly foggy air ahead. Then Captain Cartier whirled about.

"Land! Land!" he shouted in a voice that thrilled through and through me.

At the same instant, "Land! Land! nor' by nor'-west!" called the lookout from the foretop.

De Pont Brian and I fairly leaped to the side of Captain Cartier.

"Where? Whereabouts?" we both cried.

"There, there, looking somewhat like a low-lying cloud resting on the water!" Captain Cartier answered and pointed with his finger.

My eyes followed his pointing finger; but at first I could see nothing that to my landsman's eyes looked like land. Then a slight shifting of the wind lifted the fog a bit and I saw a black spot on the horizon, lying close down on the water and so small that methought I might cover it with one of the blankets from my bunk.

Even I could tell that this black spot was neither fog nor cloud, but good solid land—my first glimpse of the New World, albeit but one of its small islands!

"Land! Land!" I, too, cried out and caught hold of De Pont Brian and we both danced about in our gladness, shouting "Land! Land!" as if we were not quite sane, as, in truth, we were not!

In a minute more the foredeck was crowded. Goliath came running among the first. I noted that, in his haste, for once he came without his great bow and long arrows. Directly behind him ran Taignoagny and Domagaia, both so excited that they came running with naught on but breech-clouts, albeit a cold damp wind was blowing which caused me to shiver in my warm jacket, but which the two savages seemed not to mind at all.

"That should be the Island of Birds," Goliath said, a broad grin of delight coming on his face as he turned to me. "I remember it well from our former voyage [1] on account of the birds. They were so thick that I got my belly full of feathers, just from breathing on the island. Aye, lads, we'll have great sport with the birds, when we get there; and I'll show you how superior the bow is, when it comes to shooting birds on the wing, to all other weapons, even to that newfangled invention, the harquebus, which kicks with its hind part like a mule, spits out flames and smoke like a dragon, shoots a two-ounce ball of lead and makes a noise like thunder. Odds life preserve me from such a weapon!" I could not keep my eyes from off this island; could think of nothing but that my feet soon would be on solid land,

[1] This, as you will recall, was Captain Cartier's Second Voyage to the New World. Goliath, as you will also recall, was with him on his First Voyage. The Island of Birds is now known as Funk Island.—E. M.

on the land of that very New World, of which I had been dreaming for so long a time! Then, I had been cooped up in a ship day after day for many weeks, seeing the same faces, the same surroundings, and there had come to me a great longing to walk on the solid earth again, to see green trees and grass growing, to hear earth-sounds, to look on the faces of human beings, be it but the faces of savages. My feet fairly ached to feel ground beneath them, my ears to hear the voices of birds and animals—any earth-sounds. But, most of all, I longed to set foot on the soil of this New World.

Thus you can understand how the sight of the Island of Birds moved me. I had not spoken after that glad shout of "Land! Land!"; but had stood staring like one entranced at the distant island. Now I turned to Captain Cartier.

"When shall we come to this island?" I asked.

"A little before sunset," he answered, after measuring the distance with his eyes for a minute or more. "Goliath be right. It is the Island of Birds, where we landed on my First Voyage and lieth only some fourteen leagues from the main land. Wherefore I am sure you are both glad after seeing naught but the sea for so long a time." He smiled and from the smile and the light in his eyes, I saw that some of the gladness was in his own heart.

For the rest of that day methought the ship walked like a snail on the sand, so eager was I to come to this island. De Pont Brian and I, for the greater part of the time, sat on a great coil of rope on the deck and watched the island grow large in our eyes. Then, when the sun hung low and red, we came to the island itself, as Captain Cartier had promised we would. A great bank of ice, cracked and broken, with huge pieces piled

one on top of the other, in a most odd fashion, still completely surrounded the little island, which Captain Cartier said was but a league in circuit.

"No wonder it is called the Island of Birds!" De Pont Brian exclaimed, as we stood on deck and watched the clouds of birds circling above it and lighting on its rocks. "From here they look as if they filled the air and covered the ground completely. I do not see how they can find room either to fly or to light. 'Tis an incredible sight! I would not believe it, did not my own eyes show it to me! But what a barren, desolate-looking island it is, with its great wall of tumbling ice around it and that vast multitude of birds circling above it! I do not see how we can get to it, through that barrier of ice," and he turned disappointedly to me.

"Nathless Captain Cartier is about to try. See, they are lowering two boats!" I exclaimed. "Surely they will not go without us?"

"Hold on! We are going with you!" shouted De Pont Brian excitedly; and we both started on the run for the main deck, where Captain Cartier was supervising the lowering of the boats.

"Then get your harquebuses and bring your swords and pistols. There might be savages on the island, come thither after birds. Hurry!"

We were back on deck in time to get into the last of the two boats to be lowered, along with Captain Cartier. Instantly the seamen thrust their oars into the water and we were off. I noted, with a little thrill, that all the sailors carried guns with them. At length the New World, with its adventures and perils, actually lay before us!

CHAPTER XI

WE SEE A WHITE BEAR

WHEN we came to the ice we found it much less of a barrier to our boats than we expected. The ice was rotten. Great cakes of it looked like sponges, from the many holes made in them by the warm winds and the rain, and the heat of the sun, which was becoming quite warm. In truth, I had thought to find this region much colder than it was, having heard and read many tales of the frigidness of the weather in this northland. All the ice surrounding the island appeared to have come floating down from the north, carried hither by some current in the ocean, or so thought Captain Cartier. I do not know for what reason it gathered about the shores of this island—but enow about ice. I will get back to ourselves and the boats.

We found but little difficulty in pushing our boats betwixt the larger cakes of ice, where were many narrow lanes of open water, and came quickly to the shore without mishap.

I was in the prow of our boat, which was now a few feet ahead of the other; and the moment I could see land within foot-reach, I leaped out.

"First on land!" I shouted, as I leaped. "First on land of this New World Island of all on board ship! Hurrah!" and I out with my sword and whirled it about my head. But then, you must remember that I was little more than a boy; and to be first of our men on the land of even this small island of the great New

World seemed a big deed to me. Then, also, I had even beaten De Pont Brian, a thing I so seldom did that there was glory even in that for me!

"I am second!" I heard him shout a moment later, above the noisy clamor made by the birds, as he leaped on the beach by my side and jerked out his sword. "Now for the Great Adventure!" and he swung the sword up around his head. As he did this there came a sudden squawk and the next instant a great headless bird flopped down at his feet.

We both stared down at the bird in amaze, at first not realizing that it was the upward flourish of De Pont Brian's sword that had cut off the head of the bird. Then we both looked above our heads. At my first glance I quickly ducked and so did De Pont Brian; for it looked as if a flock of these birds, flying swiftly, were aiming directly at our heads. Howbeit, they passed safely over us, with an almost deafening buzzing of their wings. I am most certain that one of them flew directly through the spot where my head had been. They seemed to have no fear of human beings, doubtless because they so seldom saw them.

"First blood for De Pont Brian!" laughed Captain Cartier. "Pick up the bird and throw it into the boat. It is young and will go into the stomach leaving a most pleasant relish behind it, after these many weeks of eating naught but salted meats."

"What a curious bird!" De Pont Brian exclaimed, as he stooped and picked up the bird, which somewhat resembled a small goose in shape and size. "I do not see how it could fly at all with such small wings! Why, they be little larger than my outspread hand with a bit of the wrist attached to it! I never saw a bird like it

before. What is it called?" and he turned to Captain Cartier.

"I know not what they are called by naturalists," he answered. "Mayhap no naturalist has ever named them; but, when we visited this island on my First Voyage to America, we gave them the name of Aporath.[1] I have never seen any birds like these in any other part of the world where I have been. They lie for the most part upon the sea and cannot fly very high, because their wings are so little. Yet they do fly, level to the water, as swiftly as any birds of the air. They are also exceeding fat and make good eating. Now get your clubs and let us see how quickly we can fill our two boats with these fat ones. It already grows late, but darkness comes slowly in this northern clime."

All the seamen now armed themselves with clubs, which lay ready at hand in the bottoms of the two boats, and at once set about knocking on the heads the fattest of these birds. Captain Cartier, De Pont Brian and I used only our swords, cutting off their heads with them as neatly as might be. The birds made no efforts to escape us, but did make so great a squawking and clamor that we could not hear ourselves think, as the saying goes.

There was another sort of bird[2] along with these, but bigger and white, which bite, even as dogs do. One of this kind caught the hand of a seaman, who chanced

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[1] Supposed by some to have been the great auk, at that time thought to be common in this region, but now extinct. However, since naturalists now insist that the great auk could not fly, on account of the smallness of its wings and the weight of its body, I do not see how this bird killed by De Pont Brian could have been the great auk. Another thing: from the description given, it would appear to have been a smaller bird than the great auk—but let those interested study out this matter among themselves.—E. M.

[2] Gannet or Solan Goose.—E. M.

to be near me at the time, in his great bill and did bite so fiercely and held on so stoutly that the man could not free his hand and he began to dance and yell, like one who thought that death had hold of him, jerking the bird about, yet not breaking its hold on his hand. I sprang to his aid as quickly as might be and cut off the head of the bird with my sword; but, even then, the bill clung to the hand and I had to pry it loose with the point of my sword. The flesh of the hand was badly cut and bruised and the wound bled profusely, but no bones were broken or crushed. Captain Cartier bound up the hand as best he could and told the man that he need do no more bird-hunting that day. You may be sure that I and the others went not near these birds after this mishap, especially since Captain Cartier told us that they were of a most unsavory flavor, unfit for eating and that he wanted none of them in the boats.

For a time I found great sport in cutting off the heads of these birds. De Pont Brian and I even ran a race to see who could cut off the greatest number of heads in a given time and I won the race, but only by two heads. After this race the sport began to pall on both of us. It did not seem like a good sport thus to slay the birds as easily as cutting off the heads of daisies in a field crowded with them. But you will understand how greatly we craved their bodies for food, after having been without fresh meat of any kind for so long a time. Also our salted meat supply was running low, and the flesh of these birds, pounded into a powder and salted, would give us a fresh supply, which would keep well and have a savory taste.

Mayhap you will best understand the vast number of these birds, when I tell you that we did fill our two

boats with them, until it were a danger to put in another bird, in less than half an hour.

Now that we had our fill of the birds, for which we came, and the air beginning to grow dark with the coming of night, Captain Cartier ordered us back on board the ship. As we pushed off from the shore, I glanced back at the island and the next instant uttered a cry of astoundment, at the same time pointing to where a great rock thrust itself above the surrounding rocks for, perchance, some twenty feet. The top of this rock was flat, like a table.

"Look! Look!" I shouted, so as to be heard above the noise made by the birds, "A bear! A white bear! As sure as I can see straight, there stands a great white bear!" For I saw, standing on this huge flat rock and regarding us with curious eyes, as if he had never seen our like before, a monster of a bear, with fur as white as snow.

"Glory be! It is a bear, a white bear!" yelled De Pont Brian at the first sight of the animal. "Let us go hunt him!" and, in his excitement, he caught up his harquebus. "Why, I am most certain I can kill him from here!" and the butt of his gun went to his shoulder.

"Hold! Hold! Do not shoot!" and the hand of Captain Cartier went out quickly and caught the barrel of the gun, before the finger of De Pont Brian, who was as excited as a young boy would have been, could press the trigger. "Early to-morrow morning we will go after him. It is too late in the day now. Also, we have the birds to get on board ship. The bear will not leave the island. He is too fond of the taste of the birds to do that. 'Tis somewhat wondrous that bears should be found on this island, which is some fourteen leagues from the mainland, yet we did also find a huge white

bear here, and killed it, last year when we came hither. They must be wondrous swimmers. Aye, in the morning we will go after bruin; and, if he be a true brother to the one we killed last year, he will give you two lads some exciting moments. To your oars, my hearties!" and he turned to the oarsmen in the boats.

De Pont Brian and I were up betimes the next morning, each filled with excitement at the thought of the coming hunt. We had spent nearly an hour the night before cleaning, oiling and making certain our harquebuses and pistols were in the best possible condition. We had even whetted our swords, until their edges would cut hairs in two. You will not wonder at all this interest and excitement when you remember that this bear hunt would be our first real adventure in this strange New World, where even the bears were different. I had often seen bears in France, but never a white bear like this one, nor one as huge as that great one had looked to be. Also neither De Pont Brian nor I had ever killed a bear, not even an ordinary bear, let alone one of these huge white animals, which looked as large as cows.

"I know the very spot on the floor of my room in France, whereon I will lay that monster's skin, if it be my good chance to kill him," De Pont Brian said, as, fully equipped, we hurried from our cabin to the main-deck, fearful of keeping Captain Cartier waiting.

"But," I replied, grinning, "I have decided to kill that particular bear myself. He would look great on the floor of my room, with his mouth wide open, his long teeth and red gums showing and his huge arms and paws outstretched. Also, he would give Mignon so great a fright that she would not dare to go into my room when I am not there, which would be a blessing, for she be a most mischievous girl."

"Now, 'twould be a sin to frighten that sweet sister of yours," laughed De Pont Brian; "wherefore I am more determined than ever to kill that bear and wilt wager my pistol, the one with the pearl handle, against that small dagger, which hangs from thy girdle that I do the killing."

"Done!" and I quickly grasped his hand.

"What! am I to have no hand in this brave matter? By the three points of my black beard I'll not have it so!" and the great hairy hand of Goliath suddenly closed down over both of ours. "I vow 'twill be one of my long arrows that wilt let the life out of bruin; or I'll swallow the first morse [1] I see, hide, bones, big tusks and all, down at one great gulp, sobeit you will shave off his hair first and grease him well. I——"

"All aboard!" at this moment shouted Captain Cartier, from the forward end of the deck and I noted the joyous lilt of excitement in his voice. "Art ready?" and his keen eyes went swiftly over us from head to foot. "Hurry, or we go without you!"

"Aye, we come!" we called back and the three of us started on the run for the part of the deck where Captain Cartier stood.

We found our boat already afloat by the side of the ship, with the seamen who were to go with us in it and with them the two savages, Taignoagny and Domagaia, now dressed in their native costume of skins and armed with bows and arrows and long lances.

We made no delay in getting into the boat and at once started for the island, which we reached without mishap.

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[1] Walrus, variously named morse, sea-horse, sea-lion, sea-ox, etc., by the early explorers of this region.—E. M.

CHAPTER XII

A FEARFUL FIGHT

THE birds now seemed more numerous than they had the day before. The moment we set foot on the shore, those on the land near us took to their wings and joined those already in the air and all circled and whirled above our heads in so great numbers that they were a marvel to see, while the clamor they made with their shrill cries and the sounds that came from the buzzing of the multitude of their wings beating the air fairly deafened our ears. Again I wondered at the prodigious number of the birds.

The moment I landed my eyes went to the top of that huge rock whereon we had seen the bear, as did the eyes of the others, but we saw no sign of bruin. Its top was now covered with birds, as thickly as they could stand or sit.

"Birds show bear not there now," and Taignoagny pointed with his lance to the top of the rock. "White bear eat birds. Birds fly when he come."

"Let's go on top of the rock anyhow and have a look around," I urged. "Mayhap we can see the bear from there."

"Good idea," declared Captain Cartier. "Come on; but make sure that your guns are ready for instant use. I have heard that the white bear shows unusual cunning in his hunting. Perchance he lies in hiding up there, waiting for the birds to come nigh him," and he led the way toward the big rock.

We found the side of the rock toward the sea too precipitous to climb; but the land side was much broken, with many rocks piled one on top of the other. We had no difficulty climbing by these to its top. Also, here on the top were many great rocks, some of them standing close together, with small spaces betwixt them and sometimes with other rocks so fallen on their tops that they made cavelike openings. In front of one of these openings, we found many feathers and crushed and broken bones of birds.

"Here has been bruin's dinner table and, judging from the quantity of feathers and bones, he must have dined sumptuously," and Captain Cartier laughed softly. "It hardly seems probable that he would desert so rich a larder. Methinks he still lies in that dark, cavelike opening. Make ready your guns, while I have a look within. Here, Taignoagny, hand me your lance. I might need it to poke up the old fellow, if, perchance, he be sleeping after his great eating."

"White bear terrible fighter. Better let Taignoagny look," admonished the savage.

"No, I'll do the looking. Give me the lance."

Without another word Taignoagny handed Captain Cartier his long, sharp-pointed lance.

I glanced down quickly at the priming-pan of my gun; so did De Pont Brian at his. Both guns were ready for action. Captain Cartier took the lance and, holding his gun in one hand and the lance in the other, approached the opening, treading softly. Behind him went Goliath, his great bow, with arrow on string, held ready for instant shooting. Back of him and us stood the two savages, staring somewhat wildly at the cave opening, yet each holding his bow and arrow ready for quick action. At the cave opening Captain Cartier paused.

"All ready!" he called softly.

"Ready!" we answered, our voices scarce above a whisper and our eyes fixed on the entrance to that small cave.

Then Captain Cartier stood his gun up against a rock by the side of the mouth of the cave and, gripping the stout lance with his two hands, bent and cautiously peered into the dark opening.

I hardly breathed, as he looked, and, for a moment, I thought my heart had stopped beating. I glanced at De Pont Brian. His face was white, but showed no fear.

Suddenly Captain Cartier straightened up and turned to us.

"I—I can see him!" he said, in so low a tone of voice I could scarce hear him, "a great spot of white in the darkness. Evidently he sleeps. Stand ready, while I see if I can reach him with my lance," and again he bent forward and cautiously thrust the lance into the cave.

Every nerve in my body, every muscle, was now tense. Even as I now write this down, I feel again the thrill that went through me at the words, "I—I—can see him!". The great white bear then was in the cave!

"I touch him!" again came the voice of Captain Cartier, tense with the excitement he held under control. "Ah-ha! If he feel not that thrust, he must be dead—Look out!"

I saw the lance suddenly thrust outward from within, heard a roar that seemed to shake the very bones inside of me; and the dark opening of the cave was blotted out by a roaring, rushing mass of white, which suddenly loomed up before me and looked, to my startled eyes, as big as an elephant.

"Shoot! Shoot!" I heard Captain Cartier yell.

Then I saw that huge mass of white, that great, wide-

opened, red mouth, those long sharp teeth, rushing directly toward me, or so it seemed; saw Captain Cartier thrust with his lance, saw the lance break and Captain Cartier go to the ground, with the beast on top of him. For an instant, as the bear stood, with his great forepaws resting on the motionless body of Captain Cartier, his mouth wide open, his eyes glaring up furiously at us, the horrors of the sight paralyzed me, as it appeared to have done all the others.

Then the roar of Goliath broke the spell. I heard the twang of his bowstring, followed instantly by a deafening crashing roar; and I knew that De Pont Brian and I had both fired our guns at the bear on the same instant. The next moment something whizzed by me and I saw the two arrows of the savages strike the bear, saw Domagaia, who still had his lance, spring by me and thrust the point of the lance at the bear. With one blow of his great paw bruin sent the lance flying from his hand, broken and splintered.

The bear was now growling terribly. His wide-opened mouth was red with blood, his eyes blood-shot with rage, his great head swaying furiously from side to side. Suddenly he reared himself up on his hind legs, from off the body of Captain Cartier, whom he doubtless thought dead, and flung himself toward Goliath, who stood nearest to him, his great knife in his hand.

Then I saw a struggle, the like of which I had never seen before, nor have I since. When the bear sprang toward Goliath, he leaped to one side, with astonishing quickness for so large a man; and, as the beast, blind with his rage, rushed by him, he sprang upon his back, gripped his long hair with his left hand and, thus holding himself on, he drove the knife into the great body again and again. The bear, maddened by his wounds,

plunged and reared like a wild horse with a man on his back for the first time; but he could not throw off Goliath. Then he suddenly swung his head around on his long neck and seized the leg of Goliath with his teeth. There came a ripping tearing sound and Goliath, big as he is, was jerked from the bear's back and flung a dozen feet by the powerful neck, his hose nearly torn off his legs. As he fell his head struck a rock and he lay senseless, helpless, at the bear's mercy. Bruin instantly plunged after him, as if he realized Goliath's helplessness.

De Pont Brian jerked out his sword, leaped in front of the prostrate body of Goliath and faced the oncoming bear. I, with my sword out and ready in my hand, sprang to his side. On plunged the great beast, now on his hind legs, his huge body swaying, his forepaws outstretched, his eyes like two red balls of fire, his mouth wide open and streaming with blood and foam. I never before saw such a fearful sight!

As in some wild dream of horror I heard the warning yells of the two savages, heard their bowstrings twang and saw their two arrows strike the bear. Then the bear filled all the space before my eyes and I, we both, De Pont Brian and I, thrust at him with our swords. But, even as we thrust and before our points touched him, the huge body swayed suddenly to one side and then went to the ground as if every ounce of strength had suddenly gone out of it. So near was the bear to us, that, as he fell, the claws of one of his great paws rent a leg of my hose nearly from top to bottom.

But the great animal was dead, stone dead! We had killed our first large New-World animal! Had had our first New-World adventure!

"Glory be, but that old bear made a great fight, did

he not Yuon? I—" De Pont Brian stopped suddenly and leaped to where Captain Cartier still lay motionless.

With a cry of horror, I sprang to his side.

"Is he dead?" and at that word, "dead," I trembled from head to foot, so terrible was the thought of Captain Cartier dead.

But, bless the blessed saints! he was not dead, only stunned by the violence of his fall. I bent quickly and lifted his head up on my knee. As I did this, his eyes opened, stared blankly around and then he sat up with a jerk.

"What has happened? Where is the bear?" He caught sight of the dead bear, with the body of Goliath lying near it; and, with a cry of horror, jumped to his feet and, staggering a bit, rushed to where Goliath lay.

Truly, so horrified had I been by the thought that Captain Cartier might be dead, that, for the moment, I had completely forgotten Goliath and what might have happened to him, and, apparently, De Pont Brian had done the same. Now we both sprang to the side of Goliath.

But, bless the blessed saints again! Goliath, too, had been only stunned, save for his leg, which had been somewhat torn by the teeth of the bear, howbeit not badly. Even as Captain Cartier bent over him, he sat up and stared wonderingly around. In a moment his face cleared and his eyes went to the bear.

"By the bones of my ancestors, you put up a great fight, Old Fellow!" he exclaimed. "Mon Dieu! Look at his hurts! No wonder he is a dead bear!"

Truly it was no wonder that the bear was dead. Let me but recall his many hurts and you will understand how dead he must have been. The broken-off part of Captain Cartier's lance thrust itself up betwixt his ribs;

the long arrow of Goliath stood out from his left breast, buried in the great body nearly to the feathers on the shaft; near it were the two arrows first shot by Taignoagny and Domagaia, the two wounds made by the bullets from our guns, the second two arrows from the bows of the savages and the knife thrusts of Goliath. Aye, the white bear had made a great fight for his life!

"Surely all the honor and the glory of this fight belongs to the white bear!" exclaimed De Pont Brian, as he stood looking down on the many wounds of the great beast. "What a monster he is! I never saw a bear in Europe the size of this one! But, was the fight not most exciting, while it lasted? If this be the harbinger of what is to come, then, ho for the New World!"

Thus exclaimed De Pont Brian and so thought I, as soon as I got all of my courage back inside of me; for I am most certain some of it fled when that white monster reared himself up on his hind legs and plunged toward De Pont Brian and me.

"Now," and De Pont Brian looked quizzically at me, as we stood by the body of the dead bear, "how shall we come to a settlement of our bets? Who won? Since it would seem that no one of us killed the bear by himself; but that all together had a hand in the killing."

"I know not as to who did the killing," broke in Goliath, before I had a chance to reply; "but, of a certainty, all the honors belong to me; for was not I the only one the bear thought worthy of tasting? He got a good bite of meat out of my leg and then came back asking for more!" and Goliath grinned widely as he glanced down at his wounded leg.

"Then that bear must have a stomach made out of a cuirass of steel," laughed De Pont Brian. "But as to who won the great hide? I think it should go to Cap-

tain Cartier, since it was he who drove the bear out of the cave and gave him his first wound!"

To this we all gave quick assent, at which Captain Cartier seemed much pleased.

"I'll have the great skin properly prepared and keep it always on the floor of my cabin, as a memorial of this great fight. Now we must get busy and get the great carcass on board the ship and the skin off. After this is done, we'll have a feast on his meat, which you will find as good eating as the flesh of a young bull."

Now, as we bore the body of the dead bear to the boat, I saw a certain kind of bird, which hovereth in the air and over the sea less than do the other birds, behave in so curious a manner that I must set it down here. The moment they caught sight of us, they ran quickly and put themselves under the wings of other birds that are greater; and this, I am well assured, they do as a common habit, even as young chicks seek warmth and safety under the wings of their mother. I thought this a most curious and interesting habit, not only because of the doing of it by the smaller birds, but because the larger birds permitted its doing, since they were an altogether different kind of bird. I saw many thousands of these birds on this island and all behaved in like manner. Captain Cartier called these birds Godetz.[1]

There be yet another most curious bird[2] on this island, somewhat like to crows, with red bills and red feet, which do make their nests in holes in the ground, even as do conies.[3] I thought it most strange that a bird,

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[1] Murries or razorbills.—E. M.

[2] Doubtless the puffin, which makes the nest either in the burrow of a rabbit or digs it himself.—E. M.

[3] Rabbits—E. M.

of all things that live, should make his home in a dark hole in the ground.

That night, when the work of caring for the carcass and the skin of the bear was done, we all gathered around a great table in the cook's galley and feasted on bear meat. Even Captain Cartier was there and sat at the head of the table and joined in the rough merry-making in a most jovial and friendly manner. Captain Cartier often showed a like friendliness of spirit toward his men. There was never anything forbidding, nor haughty, nor arrogant in his behavior toward them. Yet, never have I known a captain who could be more firm and stern, when there was need.

CHAPTER XIII

WE HUNT A FIERCE ANIMAL

THE next morning, when De Pont Brian and I awoke, we found the ship already in motion and made all possible speed in getting out on deck, where we could see things. There was a prosperous wind blowing and we were making fine headway. This gladdened our hearts; for we were most anxious to come to the Bay of Castles [1], where it had been arranged that, should our ships become separated by storms or otherwise, all the ships should foregather and each await the coming of the others, as I have mentioned afore. We both knew that Captain Cartier now purposed to sail direct to the Bay of Castles; for, doubtless, he was even more anxious than were we to learn if his two ships and their men were safe or no.

"I wonder what Captain Cartier will do, if we find not the two ships awaiting us at the Bay of Castles?" I said anxiously, as we came to a stop at the deck railing. "You will remember he promised the discontented seamen to turn about ship and sail back to France, if the missing ships were not there nor came not after a reasonable waiting, should they still wish him to do so."

"That gives me no worry," laughed De Pont Brian. "There'll be no turning back! Trust Captain Cartier for that! Besides, only last night I did sit myself down at the table by the side of Colas, that much tattooed sailor,

[1] Now known as Château Bay—E. M.

who, since the gathering under the Great Lanthorn, has become a leader among those same discontented men; and I asked him if he still wanted to go back to France, afore doing any exploring in the New World."

" 'Not I, nor any of the men,' he laughed. 'That night under the Great Lanthorn we were in a panic, because of the great storms and the groanings of the wind-devils and the dancing of the blue lights and the thoughts of the going down of the two ships and our comrades; and all men be fools, when in a panic. Now we be sane again and we go heartily with Captain Cartier wheresoever he wills.'

"So, Yuon, worry you no more over the matter. Put your trust in Captain Cartier and keep your sword sharp; for, assuredly, we go exploring in this strange New World. Captain Cartier has too great a hope of discovering a way through this New Land to China and the riches of the Orient, which would bring him much honor and glory and give to France a monopoly of that rich trade, for him to forego the exploring," he laughed.

These words of De Pont Brian gave somewhat of ease to my anxiety; but I could not put from me altogether the fear of what these rough, ignorant and superstitious sailors might do, should we come to the Bay of Castles and not find our ships and comrades awaiting us there.

Now, for mayhap a week, we sailed pleasantly over the waters of the ocean, a prospering wind filling our sails, and with all on board in good spirits and filled with high hopes. I heard much talk during these days of the New World and what we would do and find there, when we explored its lands. There were some who looked on it as the Spaniards do on Mexico, as a land where we might pick up gold and precious stones, as we pick up

pebbles on a beach in France. These had great plans of how they would go back to France so laden with gold and precious stones that each could buy himself a lordly castle and thenceforth live like a great lord, with naught to do but wear fine clothes, count his money and give orders to his servants.

Goliath, who had been so far as the coast of this New World, laughed loudly at these, declaring that there was no gold nor precious stones in that land, naught but hard rocks and barren sand, where even grass grew so scantily that acres of it would not feed one goat, or grew not at all.

But the hopeful ones, in their turn, laughed loudly at him and told him that he knew naught of what was in the interior back from the coast, which was true, and promised to fill even his big cap with nuggets of gold and precious stones in an hour's time, when they came to their Land of Promise. At which Goliath laughed yet louder.

There were still others who pictured the New World as a land of horrors and wonders, where dwelt red-faced demons, who spit forth fire and smoke, and monstrous animals on the land and yet greater monsters in the water, with mouths so great that they could swallow a man down whole at one gulp, or chop him up into fine meat, with their long sharp teeth, before he could so much as call on one saint. These declared that the country itself was like unto Paradise, with great and high mountains, pleasant hills and fertile valleys, great forests of tall trees and widespreading plains, with mighty rivers flowing into many and beautiful lakes, a fertile and glorious land—and yet a land of demons and monsters, only to be subdued by the aid of Cross and Church.

As for myself, I thought all this talk about a land of which none of us knew a thing with certainty, a most vain and foolish waste of time. At the end of this week of pleasant sailing and much planning and hoping, during which we saw many islands and were never far from that great island, called Newfoundland, we came at length nigh to the Bay of Castles, wherein is the Port of White Sands, which was the exact spot where our ship captains had agreed to foregather, should our ships become separated.

A ridge of high rocks on one side of the entrance to this bay shuts off all view of the bay itself, until one passes around a high point of rock, when, and suddenly, the whole bay is unfolded to the eyes. It was from this direction that our captain approached the bay.

I think every man on board the ship was either on the decks or aloft in the masts, when we came near to this high point, so anxious were all to get the first view possible of the bay and see whether or no our two missing ships had foregathered there. De Pont Brian and I stood in the very forepart of the ship, where there was but room for us two. Captain Cartier and his officers were up in the lookout of the foremast. The men were grouped about in various places on the decks and in the masts.

"What think you, Claude, shall we find the two ships awaiting us in the bay?" I asked De Pont Brian anxiously and foolishly; for how could he know more about the missing ships than I did? But my anxiety must find a voice, howbeit but to ask a foolish question.

"I know not and cannot know any more than you can, until we come into the bay, so why trouble myself with such vain questions, especially, since our own eyes will give answer in so short a time? But, even if the ships

be not there, we have no cause to give over hope; for why should we think that they could sail thither more quickly than could Captain Cartier."

"But—" I began.

"Now, now Yuon," interrupted De Pont Brian, "we be about to round the point. I have no more ears—only eyes," and he leaned forward over the railing, in order to get a view of the bay the sooner by a few fractions of a second.

I did likewise and strained my eyes to get the first sight of the bay, as slowly, very slowly it seemed to me, the ship rounded the point. First I saw but the entrance to the bay, then came that curious formation of rocks, like to a castle, which hath given to the bay its name, and then, of a sudden, the whole bay widened out in front of me!

I blinked and rubbed my eyes. Not a ship of any kind lay on the quiet waters before me! A chill ran through my blood at the thought of what this portended. A hush came over the whole ship. I heard only a long-drawn gasp of disappointment, which, for a moment, seemed to fill all the air around me.

"They are not here!" suddenly cried out one of the seamen. "The two ships have gone down! We shall never more see our comrades! All have perished!"

At that cry, I saw a frown come on the faces of many of the seamen, saw their eyes go gloomily, somewhat threateningly, to where Captain Cartier stood——

"Bravo! Bravo, my men! We have beaten both ships to the rendezvous!" shouted back Captain Cartier triumphantly, in answer to their looks, as if, in truth, we had won a great race.

For a moment the seamen stood dumbfounded, so different had been the meaning of the words shouted

by Captain Cartier from their own gloomy and fearful thoughts. Then the old seaman, Colas, caught off his cap and swung it around his head.

"Cheers! Cheers for Captain Cartier!" he yelled. "He has won the race for us! We have beaten both the *Little Herminia* and the *Hermerillon* to the rendezvous! Was there ever another captain like our own captain?" and, somewhat to my surprise, the cheering was taken up heartily by every man on board.

Thus, and most shrewdly, I thought, did Captain Cartier put new hopes of the coming of the two ships and our comrades into the hearts of all of us.

Truly, Captain Cartier knew his seamen!

We at once furled sails and cast anchor in front of the Port of White Sands; for it was the purpose of Captain Cartier to await here, for a reasonable time, the coming of the two missing ships; and, meanwhile, to put our ship in order.

So eager were De Pont Brian and I to get on land, that, on our very first morning here, we asked permission to go hunting on shore and begged that Goliath might go with us. Captain Cartier smiled, as he told us that we could go and that Goliath could go with us; and he smiled yet again, when he cautioned us to go fully armed and to be exceedingly careful that no white bears nor red savages ambushed us. We both wondered somewhat at his willingness to let us go, especially after his caution about the bears and the savages.

As soon as we had landed, De Pont Brian and I, mindful of the cautions of Captain Cartier, looked to the priming of our harquebuses and pistols and saw that our swords hung where our hands could find and draw them most quickly. This done, our eyes went over the land in front of us. A more desolate and barren country

I never saw before. From where we stood on the shore, I could see only a few stunted and scrubby trees and, mayhap grass enow to keep one goat alive, if he were a small goat. All else was hard rock and white sand, save for a scrawny kind of mosslike vine, which grew among the rocks. No other living thing could I see, unless the sea-birds be counted. They were ever circling and whirling above our heads and going down to rest themselves on the rocks and the sand.

While De Pont Brian and I had thus made ourselves ready for instant action, Goliath had stood and watched us, a broad grin on his face and his great bow unstrung in his hand.

"You be wise," he now said and chuckled softly, "to go thus prepared, for I have heard tell of a fierce white beast, which roams among these rocks and scrubby trees. So keep your eyes ever on the alert, for there will be little enow time for action, once we set eyes on this beast."

"And you?" I queried, glancing at his unready bow, "Go you with bow unstrung to meet this fierce beast?"

" 'Tis a matter quickly remedied," he replied and swiftly strung his bow, drew an arrow from his quiver and fitted it to the taut bowstring. "Now, if you be ready, let's go look for that fierce beast?" and the grin on his face widened.

"First, let us climb to the top of those rocks and have a look at the country," I said and pointed to where a great pile of rocks reared itself upward for, perchance, seventy-five feet. "Mayhap, from there we can see that fierce beast of yours," and we started inland toward the rocks, which were only some hundred yards from where we stood.

We had no difficulty in climbing the rocks and soon the three of us stood on their topmost point. Now the whole surrounding country lay below our eyes; for there were no other rocks in sight and the land lay nearly level, save where billowlike ledges of rock thrust their backs above the sand. There were no signs of other vegetation here than what we had seen from the shore, except in the distance, we saw a few clumps of taller trees.

"And what, I pray you tell me, doth this fierce white beast of yours live on?" I asked, a bit scornfully of Goliath. "Surely anything that hath a stomach would die here."

"Not so," he grinned back; "for this beast I tell of doth keep his stomach well-filled with the eggs and the flesh of these many thousands of birds, even as did that great white bear we killed. Now, look you sharply about; for this pile of rocks is just the kind of place wherein this fierce beast loves to lurk and spring out suddenly upon his prey—Ah!" and he gave a great start. "See, there is one now! In that great cavelike opening a little below us! Look, he is thrusting his head out of that huge crack in the wall and watching us! For the love of the saints, shoot, shoot quickly! or——"

"Where? where?" I cried excitedly, bringing my gun swiftly to my shoulder. "I see no——"

"I see him! I see him!" yelled De Pont Brian; and the flame and the smoke of his gun swept by my face and the roar of it deafened my ears.

At the same moment I heard the twang of Goliath's bowstring and his excited cry, "Shoot, shoot, Yuon, or the monster 'll——"

At that instant I caught sight of a great blotch of white a little back in the cave from the entrance, thought I saw it move and, knowing well the value of time at

such a crisis, I took quick aim and fired at the white blotch.

"Got him! We got him!" roared Goliath and rushed into the cave, bent and picked up something white and held it up in his hand.

I stared blankly at Goliath and what he held up in his hand. I heard De Pont Brian laugh and turned and stared blankly at him. Then a roar from Goliath caused me to turn again and stare, as blankly as before, at him and that small, limp, white thing he held up high in his hand.

"This," and a great grin spread all over his face. "This be the fierce white beast I told you of. In truth, no more fierce and bloody beast, for its size, lives. Kings and queens love its fur——"

" 'Tis an ermine!" broke in De Pont Brian excitedly. "The King has a whole robe made out of the skins of these little fellows and he prizes it most highly."

"Aye, you be right. 'Tis an ermine. But, as for this skin, I fear me, betwixt your ball and my arrow, not much fur is left," and Goliath stepped out of the cave, where it was somewhat dark, and into the light and held up the little body.

The head clung to the body but by a shred of skin. There had passed Goliath's arrow! The half of the body itself had been blown away by De Pont Brian's bullet. As for my bullet—doubtless it had plowed a furrow through the bank of snow, which, protected from the sun, still remained in the cave. Howbeit, I said naught of this; for I was angered and, mayhap, a little shamed, at the way Goliath had fooled me, albeit, doubtless, it was my own dullness that did the fooling.

"And I," I cried out in disgust, "expected to see a monster, even larger and fiercer than the white bear,

rush from out that cave! And now you hold that monster up for me to see betwixt your thumb and finger! Goliath, you be truly a monstrous liar!"

"Oh, ho! Think you so, Yuon. Then I am well-pleased; for artful lying needs a fine fancy. But, take it not to heart, lad. You be not the only one Goliath hath fooled with his lying. Now, truly, there be no larger animals in this region than the one we have just killed. We hunted when here last year and found none. Assuredly you do not think that Captain Cartier would have suffered you to go hunting here, with only me to guard you, had there been danger from great beasts and savage men? Still I did not think to fool you so greatly, only a little," and again Goliath laughed, which I thought most foolish of him. "In a way, I did but test you; and right nobly you have met the test. You thought a great monster was rushing at you from out the cave, yet your bullet went true—straight through the heart of that snowbank in the cave!" and once again Goliath roared with laughter.

This time I laughed with him; for by now, I began to see the humor of the situation; and a hearty laugh at oneself is sometimes good for the conceit, which is in all of us.

We examined what was left of the ermine, prize of kings, with great interest. It was about ten inches long, with a four-inch tail; and the whole little body was as white as the snow in the cave, save the tip of the tail, which was black and somewhat bushy.

"Aye, he be a fierce little beast!" again declared Goliath. "Look at the bloody feathers and bones scattered about in the cave. One would think that an animal at least as large as a bear had made his home there. Truly, for the size of him, he be the most fierce and

bloody beast I know of. But, 'tis most uncommon to find their fur white at this time of the year; for you must know that this dainty little lady doth change her furs with the changing seasons, even as do the fine ladies in France, wearing only white in the winter-time, when the white snow is on the ground, as a protection from her enemies, and a reddish-brown usually during the summer. Now, I wonder," and Goliath's eyes lighted with interest, "if that bank of snow in the cave can be the cause of her still wearing her winter-furs? It would give her perfect protection; for, standing against that white snow in the dark of the cave, not an eye of an enemy could detect her white body. Oh, the wise little lady!"

Now, I saw by the light, which had come suddenly into De Pont Brian's eyes, that a pleasant thought had come to him.

"I know what you and I will do, Yuon!" he exclaimed enthusiastically the moment Goliath paused. "We will hunt and trap these ermines, whilst waiting here for the two ships to come, and see if we can gather enow skins to make ourselves robes of ermine which will be the envy of all the kings of Europe. What say you to that, Yuon?"

"I say, yes," I answered, with equal enthusiasm. "I have a certain long cloak that I would much like to trim with this beautiful fur; and my sister, Mignon, would go almost wild with delight could she but have an ermine cloak to make more glorious her dark beauty; for, you must know, Claude, that my sister is the most beautiful girl in all France. Not only her father and I think thus; but, also, all who have seen her. Aye, she would be delighted with an ermine cloak; and she shall have one, most skilfully wrought by the best cloakmakers in

Paris, if I can but find me enow ermines to make her one."

Goliath entered heartily in our plot against the ermines and proved himself most helpful. He had a wondrous knowledge of traps and snares and tricks, whereby we might capture the little beast without tearing the skin all to pieces with arrow or bullet. But, when we came to hunt and trap the ermine, we found them not as plentiful as we had thought; and the three of us had captured only one hundred and nine, when, at length——

But I be driving my horse too fast and am getting ahead of my story; and must slow down and go back, in order to have things come in their proper turn, just as they happened.

CHAPTER XIV

TROUBLE AGAIN WITH THE SEAMEN—AND A JOYFUL REUNION

TIME went very pleasantly, the weather being kindly, with us at the Port of the White Sands. The men, even the more ignorant and superstitious of them, appeared to be contented and all were looking forward with a happy interest to our explorations in the New World. They seemed now to give little or no thought to the missing ships or to their lost comrades, or so it then seemed to me. With the New World almost in sight of their eyes, all became eager to see some of its sights, to solve some of its mysteries, to find some of its possible treasures of gold and precious stones. Truly I think that, if Captain Cartier had at this time proposed to turn about ship and sail back to France, without going farther, they would have mutinied, so interested in the voyage had they become. The spirit of the great adventure had gotten into their blood!

But I could see that Captain Cartier was becoming more and more uneasy, as day after day went by without the coming of the missing men and ships, the loss of which would be a serious blow to his enterprise in the New World; for he could replace ships nor men nor supplies here. Nathless he always presented a bold front and smiling face to his men and they had naught but cheery words from his lips.

On the very first day of our coming to the appointed rendezvous, the Port of White Sands, Captain Cartier

had stationed a sailor in the top of the main mast, to give us warning of the approach of any ships. From this high lookout the sailor could see over the ridge of rocks and the water outside the bay for miles. Captain Cartier now looked up often to this sailor and every hour or so during the day he called up to him; but always the report came down, "A quiet sea and no sails in sight."

Then, at length, came the eleventh day of our vain waiting here. I could see that Captain Cartier now had about given up all hope of the coming of the men and ships. I knew this of a certainty, when, near the middle of that afternoon, he bade De Pont Brian and me go tell his officers to come to his cabin and to come quietly, one by one, so as not to awaken the suspicions of his men that he was holding council with them. When we had done this he bade us also to come to him in his cabin.

We found him, when, a little later, our messages delivered, we entered his cabin, seated at his table, closely examining his globe, which stood at his side. So intense was his study of the globe that, at first, he did not appear to notice our entrance. For a minute or two we waited, standing somewhat awkwardly near the door. Then he suddenly straightened up and turned his eyes to us.

"Have you done as I bade you and summoned all the ship's officers to come hither?" he asked.

"Aye," answered De Pont Brian.

"And they come?"

"Aye," again answered De Pont Brian. "They will be here presently."

Even as he spoke there came a rap on the door and Thomas Frosmont, Chief Master of the ship, entered and seated himself at the big table at the bidding of Cap-

tain Cartier. Then, one by one, with intervals of a minute or two betwixt them, came the other officers and three young gentlemen, Charles of Pommeraye, John Guion and John Powlet, whom he had bade us summon also to the council.

When all the men had entered and seated themselves around the big table, Captain Cartier, sitting back somewhat stiffly in his chair and looking straight in front of him, with something of sadness in the look, I thought, lifted a hand for silence.

"Men," he said, entering abruptly on the matter before him, as is his custom, "we have waited overlong for the coming of the missing ships. I fear me greatly that they went down in that dreadful storm and that all the men on board perished. God receive their souls! The saints give comfort and help to those to whom they were near and dear!" He bowed his head for a moment, as did all seated at the table. Then, presently, he looked up, a great firmness on his face.

"We," he continued, "have been sent hither by command of the King to attempt to accomplish certain things for the service of his Majesty and of France and we must not tarry here over long, even in waiting for our two missing ships and their men. If the ships and the men have perished, then our further waiting here would be profitless. If the ships still float and the men live, which God grant, they will one day reach this port and we can leave a message here for them, giving our course from here and bidding them to follow us as promptly and as speedily as possible. Having done this, we can up with our sails and go about our business, according to the King's commands. Now I have summoned you hither, to learn if you agree with me that this be our wisest plan and if you will serve me faith-

fully and loyally in carrying it out, notwithstanding the loss of so many men and the two ships and the supplies they carried will greatly add to the perils and the hardships, which, in the nature of things, all who go exploring in an unknown country, as we do, will be called on to endure. But," and the face of Captain Cartier lit up and his eyes sparkled at that "but." "But the adventure will be all the greater because of these unexpected and added difficulties and its winning all the more glorious! What say you, men? Shall we on for King and France?"

Ah, then I felt glory in my French birth; for, at these words of Captain Cartier, every man at the table jumped to his feet and pledged him his loyal and faithful service, go where he would, sobeit he went but in the service of King and Country. It was good to witness and to feel so great a spirit of loyalty to their Captain and of service to their King and Country!

Now we went on the main deck and Captain Cartier summoned all the men on board the ship to come hither. When they had gathered here, he spoke to them in much the same words he had used to his officers in the cabin; but with not the same results, greatly to my surprise.

"No," spoke up one burly sailor the instant Captain Cartier ceased. "We would stay here until our comrades and ships come. 'Twould be like deserting good and true comrades, if we did. We would go not until we have awaited their coming here for at least a fortnight longer. Thus I say and I abide by my saying."

"Aye, so say I," cried out another and another.

" 'Twould be a sin on our souls to desert our comrades in this wild and unknown region. Aye, we will

abide here their coming for at least a fortnight longer. So say I and what I say, I do."

"But, we cannot wait here so long, when time presses us so closely," declared Captain Cartier, a frown coming on his face. "We must be at our exploring, or winter will fall upon us before our exploring be done. Already the summer be nigh half gone. Besides, if our comrades come, wilt they not find our message and come after us? Men, I be your general by commandment of the King; and, mark you, we sail at the rising of tomorrow's sun. I command it!"

Then I saw a great gathering of storm clouds on the seamen's faces; saw the light in Captain Cartier's eyes harden; saw his body stiffen; saw the men gathering in muttering knots; and heard the murmurs of their angry voices, at first low but growing louder with the passing of each moment.

At this critical moment, Colas, the much tattooed sailor, stepped forth and held up both his hands for all to listen.

"Captain Cartier," he said, when there was silence, "we like not this going and leaving, it may be, our comrades to the cold inhospitality of this wild region, albeit you leave a message for their reading. Yet, 'tis most certain that you be our commander under the King. Therefore, we will obey you to the uttermost; for to do otherwise would be to mutiny against our Captain, our King and our Country. But, Captain Cartier, remember you your promise, made to us after that great storm, to turn about ship and sail back to France, at our demand, sobeit, when we came to the appointed rendezvous, we found not the two missing ships and their men, or they came not after waiting a reasonable time. We be now at that rendezvous. The missing ships and men have

not come hither, albeit we have awaited their coming a reasonable time, according to your own setting forth. Captain Cartier, we hold you to that promise. We demand that you turn about ship and sail back to France; or that you await here for at least a fortnight longer the coming of the missing ships and men. What be your answer, Captain Cartier?"

Now, when Colas had ended speaking, my eyes went to the face of Captain Cartier, as did the eyes of every other man gathered there on deck. What would he do? What would he say to the demand of Colas that he keep his promise and sail back to France?

At first Captain Cartier appeared to be nonplussed. He frowned, bit his lip, one hand went to his beard and I saw a great disappointment come into his eyes. Then, suddenly, his face cleared, his eye brightened, he smiled and then broke into a low chuckling laugh.

"It would be most unseemly for a captain to give over the command of his ship to his men," he said quietly, his face now without a smile. "It would be even more unseemly for a captain to break his promise to his men. Therefore, to avoid these two unseemly things, we turn about ship and sail back to France, with the rising of to-morrow's sun. Master Frosmont," and he turned to his chief master, "see that all things be in readiness to start back for France at sunrise to-morrow. I thank you, one and all, for your attention." He made a sweeping bow to his men. "De Pont Brian, you and Yuon come with me to my cabin." He turned and strode from the deck, looking neither to the right nor to the left; but, as he passed, I thought I caught the winking of the eye turned toward us, which seemed a most foolish thing for him to do under the circumstances.

De Pont Brian and I at once started to Captain Car-

tier. As we did so, we saw that the men stood, as if dumbfounded by the words and the sudden going of Captain Cartier, all staring somewhat blankly after him and no one uttering a word. What could be troubling them, now that he had granted their demand? had even given orders for the start back to France? Evidently Captain Cartier's answer had not been what they had expected.

As for myself, never was a lad more disappointed, more indignant! To turn back now that the Great Adventure was about to begin, to me was unthinkable!

"Have they all gone insane?" I asked of De Pont Brian, as we hurried from the deck. "'Tis madness! dishonor! shame to all! to go back now to France, without even a glimpse of the mainland of this New World! The seamen of St. Malo will hoot us out of town! I did not think it of Captain Cartier!"

"Keep your hot words inside of you, Yuon. All is not yet lost!" grinned back De Pont Brian. "Did you not see the sly wink of the eye Captain Cartier turned toward us, as he strode from the deck? Of a surety that wink had a meaning, albeit, it seemed to me the most senseless wink I ever saw winked," and the grin became a chuckle.

"And to me," I answered indignantly.

We were now at the door of Captain Cartier's cabin, which he had left open behind him.

"How looked my brave seamen at my sudden departure?" he asked, the instant the door closed behind us and before I could get the impatient question I had on the tip of my tongue out of my mouth.

"Blankly, as if your words and act had dumbfounded them," responded De Pont Brian. "I am certain that they did not expect the answer that you gave them."

"And I did not expect that they would," he chuckled. "They felt most certain that, rather than sail back to France, with nothing accomplished, I would do as they wished and remain idle here for two weeks more. But I——"

"And you be going to start back for France to-morrow at sunrise, without even having had sight of the New World?" I cried out aghast.

"Yes, Yuon, if they still demand that I keep my promise; for never yet have I broke my plighted word, nor will I now. But, fear not—" He paused to listen. "If I mistake not, they do not want to go back to France, without seeing aught of the New World, no more than you do. Even now they come to tell me this. Listen!"

Outside the door I now heard the sound of approaching footsteps.

"Aye, I know my brave seamen!" and again Captain Cartier chuckled.

A moment later there came a hesitating rap on the door, followed almost instantly by a more emphatic knocking.

"Who's there?" called Captain Cartier sharply. "Go your way. I am busy making ready for our start back to France in the morning."

" 'Tis of that we wish to speak," called back a voice, which I knew to be the voice of Colas.

"Then enter."

Colas, the burly man who had first spoken and one other pushed open the door and entered.

"Well, what would you with me? Speak quickly, for I am hard pressed for time. Know you not that we sail for France in the morning? Out with it!" He spoke brusquely.

"That be what we—" began Colas.

"That is settled. We start back for France in the morning. Heard you not my orders to Chief-Master Frosmont?"

"But—but," in his excitement Colas began to stammer, "we—we want not that—we would but wait here a little longer to see if our missing comrades and ships come—we——"

"We sail at sunrise to-morrow morning," broke in Captain Cartier impatiently. "And we sail either for France or the New World, which we came to explore and would now do so, if you men had not turned cowards, affrighted by old women's tales. I want no cowards with me when I go adventuring where there be many dangers. Therefore, we sail back to France for another crew. Now time presses. In one word, go we back to France or to our exploring in the New World? You have made the answer yours." A sternness that there was no misunderstanding had come on Captain Cartier's face, as he spoke.

Then I saw Colas grow suddenly red in the face, saw his lips open and shut, saw the tongue move in his mouth, but heard no words.

"Speak, man! Are you dumb?" shouted Captain Cartier.

Then, suddenly, the mouth of Colas flew wide open.

"We go exploring with you in the New World, when and where you will!" burst explosively from betwixt his widespread lips——

Truly, Captain Cartier knew his seamen!

And then (coming most oddly at that moment, as I then thought and still think) there came, even as the sound of that explosion of words went into my ears, a great shouting outside and the rush of many feet over

the deck above our heads—we all jumped for the door, to see what this new trouble might be.

"Surely, the sailors have mutinied," I thought as I leaped; and, at that thought of horror, my blood ran cold and my right hand went quickly to the hilt of my sword, the De Valour Sword! Then I found myself outside the door and on the deck; and, at my side, were Captain Cartier and De Pont Brian and I noted, with a thrill, that their hands, too, were on the hilts of their swords.

All about us was a confusion of mad, dancing, shouting, rushing, excited men. I was like to go mad myself with the want of knowing what it was all about. Then I heard, even above the confusion of noises on the deck and coming down from aloft over my head, a man shouting loudly. I looked up quickly and saw that the man stationed in the mast-top was wildly swinging his hat around his head and shouting at the top of his voice.

"Sails! Sails!" he yelled. "The two lost ships come!"

I heard no more, for I was following Captain Cartier and De Pont Brian up the mast. When I came to a height where I could overlook the rocks enclosing the bay and see the rolling waters of the ocean beyond, I saw, riding on the water a league or more away and coming toward us, two ships with all sails set.

"By the great gods! 'tis the *Hermerillon* and the *Little Herminia*!" shouted Captain Cartier, at this moment, from his perch above me. "Said I not that they would come together? Hurrah, men! Hurrah! The two ships come! Gunners, fire the cannon, to let them know that we are here!"

Now the excitement on the deck was doubled. A moment later came the thunderous outburst of our

cannon. I watched the two ships. A minute or two after our discharge, I saw puffs of white smoke shoot out from their sides and float upward above the ships. A little later came the distant sound of their answering cannon from over the water.

"That settles our trouble with the men. Now, I must make ready to welcome our long lost comrades," and Captain Cartier hurried down to the deck.

I cannot put down in words the joy that was now in all our hearts. We had thought the two ships and their men lost, gone down to their graves in that great lonely ocean. We ourselves had felt heartache and loneliness for them for many long days. Now, when we had about given up all hope of seeing comrades or ships again, they had come sailing safely into the appointed port, had come to this one small spot in the great loneliness of these solitary and gloomy coasts. I marveled at it! But I marveled not that, when an hour or more later the two ships came to an anchor by the side of our ship in the Port of White Sands, we acted like insane men, like men drunken with gladness.

That night we held a great celebration on board Captain Cartier's own ship; and our boisterous merrymaking must have sounded most strange to anything having ears to hear in that wild and lonely port. Most certainly the like of it had never been heard there before; and, mayhap, never will again.

CHAPTER XV

OLD JOSHUA—A STARTLING WARNING

WE did not sail in the morning. Captain Cartier found that the two ships had need of certain supplies, wood, water and other necessities. Fresh water aplenty was to be found near at hand; but the wood, as I have afore noted, was scarce and at some distance. Howbeit, on the third morning all was in readiness for our going; and we up with our anchors and sails and were moving out of the Bay of Castles, while it was yet too dark to see clearly.

We had a pleasant day of sailing over untroubled waters, along rugged coasts, with nothing happening, which I need write down here, until late that night. I think it must have been nearing midnight, when De Pont Brian and I went to our cabin, having stayed up later than usual to have talk with two young noblemen, who had been with the missing ships. Of a certainty it was late, for I remember that it was quite dark on the decks, with no one moving about, as we made our way to our cabin. We had not been inside more than two minutes, at least we had not had time to climb into our bunks, which we would have done at once, being very sleepy, when we were astonished to hear a soft rapping on the door and still more astonished, when we opened the door, to find the huge bowman, Goliath, standing there.

"Come you both quickly to the cabin of Captain Cartier," he whispered, bending his head so low that one of

the braids of his long black beard tickled my ear, and looking cautiously about him. "He bade me to tell you to come so that no one sees you coming, and separately, one about two minutes after the other. Wait here some fives minutes after my going," and he was gone so softly that I heard not a sound of his footsteps.

"What—what can this mysterious summons mean?" I asked the moment we were inside our cabin again and the door closed.

"I do not know," answered De Pont Brian; "but I fear me it has something to do with the Casket of Quetzalcoatl."

"How can that be? Surely none but we four even know of its existence—Think you it is time for one of us to go to Captain Cartier? I be all on pins and needles to know what this strange summons means. Shall I go first?" and I started toward the door.

"Yes, you go first, Yuon," and De Pont Brian smiled at the tensity of my excitement. "But wait another minute or two; and, as you go, watch carefully to see no one follows you. Move where the shadows are the blackest. There must, in truth, be need of caution, since Captain Cartier asks it. Now it is time to go—Wait!" and he quickly blew out the candle we had lit in the room and, opening the door, peered cautiously into the darkness outside, as he held his arm across the doorway to stay my going. " 'Tis clear. Go!" He removed his arm and I glided softly out into the darkness.

I am sure that no one saw me pass from our cabin to that of Captain Cartier. I kept watchful eyes about me and went quickly and silently, where the way was the darkest. The moment I came to the door I knocked and the door was instantly opened and closed behind me.

I first saw only Captain Cartier and Goliath in the

room. On the table one candle burned and that dimly; and, by its light, I saw that all three of the windows had been tightly curtained by heavy pieces of black cloth. Even the keyhole was covered. Not a ray of light could be seen from the outside.

The instant I entered Captain Cartier, without speaking, motioned me to take a chair near the table.

"What—what is it?" I whispered, unable to keep my tense excitement silent inside of me longer.

"Wait for De Pont Brian. Sit you down in the chair," Captain Cartier whispered back.

As I sat down I saw something black move in a dark corner of the room, shadowed even from the light of the one candle. So tense were my nerves at the moment that I nearly yelled. I did partly rise in my chair.

" 'Tis naught but Old Joshua Coumyn," Captain Cartier said quickly. "Sit quiet. He will not harm you. More of him later."

I would not have stirred an inch after that hint that fear had startled me, not if one of the fire-spitting demons themselves had suddenly illuminated that dark corner!

Now came a light tapping on the door and Captain Cartier, who stood near with his hand on the knob, swung it quickly open and we saw De Pont Brian enter.

"Sit you there," and Captain Cartier motioned him to a chair by my side, turned and carefully bolted and locked the door. "Now come you forth from your dark corner, Old Joshua, and tell your tale freely, for all be friends here and we are all interested in this matter."

At this, there stepped out of the corner where I had seen the movement, a man, completely dressed in black, from the black wig on his head to the black shoes on his

feet, yet I could see that he was old. His face was thin and deeply lined with wrinkles and he had a long thin nose, which astounded me greatly; for its end had been turned so far to the right side that it looked as if it had started to go to the right ear and had gone a good inch on its way, when it had suddenly taken root again in his face and had staid there. Even in that tense moment I could but wonder what happened when he blew his nose! He was below medium height and thin of body. I thought he made a most quaint and somewhat pitiful picture, in the dim light of that one candle, as he paused there by the side of the table.

"This is Joshua Coumyn, better known as Old Joshua," introduced Captain Cartier, as the old man's eyes went slowly from face to face. "He has been a most faithful servitor in my family all his years. I owe him much, even my life; for the blow, which so oddly changed the position of his nose, was received in my defence, when I was but a lad, and saved me from a cruel death. I would trust him with my life and I know he would not speak falsely to me. This, to tell you why I have faith in Old Joshua's story. He came with Marc Jalobert, Captain of the *Little Herminia* and, as I think you know, husband to my wife's sister, with whom Old Joshua has lived for the past ten years."

"He needs me to look after his clothes and things and to keep his cabin shipshape and the rust from his pistols and guns and his sword bright and sharp. Naught but Old Joshua can do these things to his liking," broke in the old man. "And I be minded to see this New World with my old eyes and to go adventuring on one more voyage afore I ship for the Long Voyage."

"Now, not half an hour agone," continued Captain Cartier, "there came a soft tapping at my door and,

when I opened it, there stood Old Joshua, his eyes dancing with excitement, his body shaking as if he had the ague and with a great terror in his eyes. He had come all alone, on this dark night, from the *Little Herminia*, in one of her small boats, to give me warning of a most dastardly plot, which if I mistake not, means much to all gathered here, but most to you, Yuon, first-born son of the Chevalier de Valour. Now, tell them your tale, Old Joshua; but first take this chair to give your body ease during the telling," and he shoved a chair to the old man's side and laid a hand softly on his shoulder.

Old Joshua, throughout this somewhat overlong introduction, had stood almost motionless, his eyes going swiftly from one face to another. Now he straightened up his old body, coughed twice to clear his throat and then sat down in the chair Captain Cartier had placed for him.

"I be mourning for my dear wife, Joan," he began, with an apologetic glance downward at his black clothes. "She died nine years agone, at three o'clock of a Sunday morning. Wherefore I go clothed in black; and will to the day I die. Now, as to this matter—" He paused and his thin face flushed and I saw fear come into his eyes, as they searched our faces. "I be afeared for my very life," he continued, "if those evil men discover that I be the one who told Captain Cartier of their wicked plotting. They would think naught of throwing me overboard some dark night, when none be looking—But, you won't tell, will you? You must promise to tell naught 'bout its being Old Joshua, or not a word will I speak. I be wanting my body to rest in the warm ground of France, aside my Joan, not in the hungry bellies of the great fish, which swim in these cold waters. Ugh! it makes me shiver to think of it! Now, you won't tell,

will you? that 'twas Old Joshua, who came with the——"

"Tut-tut, man," Captain Cartier interrupted him reassuringly. "None here will tell even that you have been on board ship this night. I, your captain, who knows well each one here present, promise you this. Now, to your tale, for we four be most impatient to hear it."

Without more delay Old Joshua began the tale.

"I be serving Marc Jalobert, as the Captain said," he commenced again, "and this night, not more than half an hour agone, being somewhat uneasy with the pains that come biting my old body and thinking that it might ease me to get out on deck, I crept from my bunk and, went out on deck, making no sound as I walked in my soft slippers. As you know it be a black night, with a chill evil wind blowing. I bethought me of the great water butts near the main mast and of the protection their great bulk would give me from that ill wind and, still moving silently, for it was late and I wanted not to disturb any who might lie sleeping below my feet, I hurried to them. There was a spot betwixt two of the butts, where they came close together, wherein I might stand protected from the wind and look out, across the deck, over the dark waters of the ocean; and here I betook me, my body taking great comfort in the change of its position and in the brisk fresh air moving on deck. But, hardly had I found the easy spots in the butts for my old back and shoulders to lean against, when I heard the sound of heavy shoes moving cautiously on the deck and coming toward me. Presently I heard a voice, so low-spoken that I could not catch the meaning of a word.

" 'Them folk be up to some evil, or they would not

come so cautiously,' I thought and hugged the water butts closer.

"Now they were so near that I could see three men, their bodies dimly outlined against the blackness of the night, approaching the very spot where I stood; but I had little fear of their seeing me, on account of my black clothes, I being in mourning for my dear Joan, as I have afore told you, and the water butts being likewise painted black and the night being that dark.

" 'Here be a good place to talk and out of the hearing of any chance walkers on deck,' said a gruff voice a moment later, as the three men paused not ten feet away and directly in front of me, without a suspicion of my being near. 'We be out of the cruel wind here, too. Now, give us that amazing story you say you have stowed away, 'bout something that will make we two as rich as dukes! Lord, but I'd like to know right well how it feels to be as rich as a duke! Now, the tale. And mind that you speak low and mention no names! Captain Cartier be most strict in little matters like this and would think naught of stretching our necks from a yardarm, if word but came to him of it.' The man with a gruff voice paused.

" 'I'll get to the matter and quickly; for I would not be caught talking with you two here in the dark, at this late hour, for all the gold we're like to find in the New World,' answered another voice, which I knew, by its sound, the owner was attempting to disguise.

" 'Nor would we two like to be caught here talking with you,' came back the quick answer from the man with a gruff voice. ' 'Tain't pleasant to think on what might happen. But, to that wondrous tale. We be all ears and most anxious to get back into our bunks afore we are missed.'

" 'Remember that box, which the arrow of Goliath brought out of the ocean?' said the disguised voice, coming at once to the matter.

" 'Aye, aye,' answered the two men, their interest quickening. 'And a most curious-looking box it was.'

" 'In truth, it was a curious-looking box and a most curious thing it had inside of it. Remember how our brave Captain, after having looked the box over, had it taken to his cabin afore he opened it. Now, why do you think he did that?'

" 'Burn me, if I know!' answered the man with the gruff voice.

" 'To keep us from seeing what was inside, when he opened it, you dolts! But I had my suspicions that there might be something worth looking at inside of that box and I——'

" 'But, Captain Cartier showed us the opened box and what he found inside of it. 'Twas naught but a bag of fool's gold, which he threw overboard, as being too worthless to keep. Now, who be the dolt?'

" 'You, you fools! to be deceived by such a cock-and-bull story,' answered the man angrily. 'I tell you, dullards, that I saw them open the box with my own eyes; and it was no bag of fool's gold they took out of it! I—I had my suspicions and hurried after them to the one window through which one outside can see into Captain Cartier's cabin. Fortune favored me! The curtain was up; and what I saw them take out of that box would make the eyes of you two men pop out of your thick heads!'

" 'What—what was it?' the two men cried out eagerly and I could fancy the greedy look that came into their eyes.

" 'Not so fast, my bullies!' answered he. 'First I

would hear you take oath to be loyal to me and would hear you swear to keep what I tell you absolutely secret from all others, under penalty of a knife in your back some dark night and your souls damned throughout all eternity. Wilt swear?'

" 'Aye, we will,' answered the gruff voice eagerly, 'albeit the swearing damn us. We'd swear to anything, provided there be enow gold in it. Give us the oath.'

"Then I heard him swear them to secrecy, with a most dreadful oath, the like of which I had never heard afore. It had blood and death and damnation in it. I shuddered to hear it. I shiver even now to think on it. I would not say it. 'Twould damn my soul did I but repeat it! Howbeit, the men made no bones of swearing it.

" 'Good,' said the man, when the swearing was done. 'Now, here's what'll get you, if you break that oath; and 'twill be my hand that'll be behind it,' and a dimly outlined hand and arm went through the motions drawing a knife and making a thrust with it.

"Now," and the fear came back into Old Joshua's eyes, "you know what a terrible chance I took, when I came here to tell Captain Cartier. I'd do the like for no other man living. If but a word of what I have done comes to the ears of one of those three evil men, I'd be no better than a dead man—but, you won't tell, now will you?" and the quiver of fear came into his voice once more.

"No, not a word of it will I tell. God punish me, if I do!" I made haste to reassure him.

"Nor I," followed De Pont Brian. "Not to save my life will I repeat a word of what you say here. But, hurry on with your story. I, too, be all ears."

"Aye," and again Captain Cartier laid a reassuring hand on the old man's shoulder, "go on with your story,

Old Joshua. There be naught to fear. I'll stake my life on it."

"Now," again began Old Joshua, the fear going from his eyes, "when the swearing was done, there came a moment's silence. Then the gruff voice said: 'We have sworn. Now tell us what curious thing it was you saw come out of that box, which will make the like of us as rich as dukes.' I could hear the greed and excitement in the man's voice.

" 'First, looking through the window, I saw them tear off the cover of the box,' answered the man. 'It was packed full of cork. They at once began digging out the cork, all showing great excitement. Suddenly, they stopped and stared down into the box, as if they could not believe their own eyes. Then Captain Cartier reached both hands down into the box and lifted out a small casket, emblazoned with gold and inlaid with precious jewels. I almost gasped out aloud my astoundment at the sight of it. But 'twas naught to what came out of the casket itself a moment later, when Captain Cartier had found out the way to open it. First, a look of great amaze and wonderment came on all their faces the instant they saw inside the casket; and, when I saw what Captain Cartier lifted out of the casket. I—God in heaven, men! 'Twas a jewel, the like of which no king in all Europe ever dreamed of possessing! and worth enow to make the three of us rich, rich as dukes! Also, I saw them take out other jewels, wonderful jewels, enow for a king's ransom! Ah, the very thought of them make my blood run hot with the desire of possession!'

" 'For such a jewel, I would kill!' breathed the gruff voice in so terrible a tone that I came nigh crying out in horror. 'Saw you where they hid the jewels?'

" 'No, before they hid them, the coming of a sailor frightened me away from my window; and, when I had opportunity to come back, the curtain had been pulled tightly down and they spoke in such low voices that I could not understand a word they said. But, doubtless, they are hidden somewhere in Captain Cartier's cabin. Had I known where they were hidden— Gods, do you think I would have shared the jewels with you? I'd have taken them all myself! But, I am not on Captain Cartier's ship. I have no opportunity to search his cabin. I must have help, someone on his own ship, who can watch for the opportunity and search his cabin. That you two must do, one to search when Captain Cartier is out of his cabin, the other to guard the searcher and give him warning of the approach of anyone.'

" 'And, if we find?'

" 'Report to me at once,' answered the man sharply. 'But, on your life, do not touch the casket. And, mark you well, you must be most cautious when you search, to leave no evidence of your searching. We must not awaken their fears. Now they feel safe. They are sure no one but themselves knows of this wondrous casket and jewels. Once we have found out where they are hidden, we will let Captain Cartier keep them in safety for us, until we are on our way back to France. In the meantime, we will study and plan how best to get them, unknown and unseen, when the time comes. We want no blood shed.'

" 'For such a jewel, I would kill!' again said that gruff voice.

" 'But, you must not kill, unless it be absolutely necessary. Remember that! You must not take the casket from its hiding-place until I order you to. Also remember that! The stakes are too high, the punishment too

dreadful, to run any unnecessary risks. Now—Whist! I hear men coming! Vanish! I will meet you as I have afore.'

"The three men dissolved swiftly into the surrounding darkness, each going in a different direction, just as the sounds of approaching voices and footsteps reached my ears, and a little party of sailors, who, evidently, had been keeping late hours with some jolly companions, passed on their way to their sleeping quarters.

"I stood, like one stunned, for a moment after the going of those terrible men; for I be getting old and do not think, nor act as quickly as I did when young. Then, suddenly, the full meaning of this dreadful revelation burst upon me and with it came the thought that I must get warning to Captain Cartier. Now, for the love of God! get me back, unknowing of any, to my ship as soon as possible!"

"Old Joshua, I'll never forget this night's deed!" and Captain Cartier caught his hand in both of his and pressed it warmly. "God alone knows how much we four owe to you; but we'll not forget the debt. Now I would ask you a question or two; and then we'll see to getting you safely back on board your own ship. Did you recognize that disguised voice or have even a suspicion as to whom it might belong? He seems to be the leader."

"No. 'Twas well disguised. I think I would not know it, even if undisguised. Only he was no common sailor. I know that by the way he spoke."

"Did you recognize the voices of either or both the two men."

"No. Their voices were strangers to my ears."

"Do you think you would recognize them, if you heard them again?"

"I might, but I am nowise certain. My ears be getting old."

"Then there is no way by which you could be sure of knowing them again?"

"I think not, Captain Cartier. They were naught to me but three shadowy men talking in the darkness. I be most sorry, Captain."

"Never mind. You have put us on guard and I doubt not but what we can now look out for ourselves and the jewels. God pity the one I find searching my cabin! Now to getting you safely, quickly and unseen back on board your own ship. De Pont Brian, Yuon— No, he must go back alone, as he came. 'Twill be safer— Help him into his boat. Thank God for so dark a night! Now, off with you and see to it that you make no noise," and again he rung Old Joshua's hand.

Fortune favored us. We got Old Joshua into his boat and off for his ship, without, I am most certain, a soul seeing us. The night was that dark and the wind that cruel that no one was on deck, saving the watch and, knowing where they were, 'twas easy to avoid them.

When we entered the cabin of Captain Cartier, on our return, we found two very sober-looking men awaiting us.

" 'Tis a fine kettle of fish we now have on our hands!" Captain Cartier exclaimed the moment the door closed behind us. "There be three men now, besides ourselves, who know of the casket and the jewels; and all are ready to kill, if there be need, to get them; and we know not one of them! Another thing, the casket itself must be rehidden and the jewels divided among us and concealed, so that, if they chance to find one of our hiding-places, they will not find all the jewels there— But, 'tis late and our minds are dulled by weariness. It

is good to sleep on a difficult problem. The jewels are safe for the present; so let us to bed. Come here at ten o'clock in the morning and we will make our plans. Good-night!" and without more words Captain Cartier dismissed us; for, in truth, it was late and a great weariness was pulling at the eyes of all of us.

Natheless, De Pont Brian and I talked the matter over after we were in our cabin; but we could form no plan that seemed to fit the case better than the one suggested by Captain Cartier.

"Old Joshua said he felt certain, from his manner of speaking, that he was no common sailor," De Pont Brian wondered. "Now, I know nearly everyone on board our three ships, who is not a common sailor, and I cannot think of one, who would be guilty, even in his thoughts, of such a dastardly crime as that planned by this man. Can you, Yuon?"

"No," I replied; and yet, way back in my mind, I had a thought— But no, it could not be a true thought! I had best let it rest, where it now lay, way back in my mind.

At ten o'clock the next morning De Pont Brian and I went to the cabin of Captain Cartier. We found Goliath already there. None of us had thought out a better plan of action than that suggested by Captain Cartier the night before; and, therefore, we speedily adopted it. When this had been done, Captain Cartier, at my request, made the division of the jewels. The casket and the wonderful emerald pyramid he gave into my keeping; and the remaining jewels he divided into three as-near-as-possible equal parts and handed one part to De Pont Brian, another to Goliath and kept the remaining part himself. It was also decided that none should keep the secret of his hiding-place from the

others. This, so that if anything should happen to one of us, the others would know where he had hidden his portion of the jewels—and many things might happen on such a parlous adventure as ours; and now, in addition, these new dangers had been added.

"As you will understand from what Old Joshua told us," Captain Cartier said, when all these things had been determined, "there seems to be no present danger of their stealing the casket and the jewels. They think it safer to leave them in our keeping as long as possible. But they wish to be sure that they know where to find them quickly, when the time to act comes. Also, they do not wish to awaken our suspicions in the slightest manner. Therefore, we must still be most careful to act as if we believed that we four were the only ones that even knew of the existence of the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the jewels. Yet another thing which is most important, we must be constantly on the watch to see if we can discover who the conspirators are, especially the leader, the man with the disguised voice, and who, evidently, is not a common sailor, like the other two. Then, hereinafter, we four must not be seen together often, as if we had some common peril or interest to ponder among ourselves. Now, let us get to our hiding of the casket and the jewels and each one of us must make sure that no unwanted eyes sees him doing the hiding. Afterward we will make known, each to the others, where they are hidden. Remember always to be on your guard, but without seeming to be. Now, I must attend to other matters that press me," and, with his usual courteous bow, he dismissed us.

It was nearing the noon hour, for we had talked longer than it would seem from what I have written down, when we went out on deck, each with his particu-

lar portion of the treasure safely hidden somewhere about him; and there were many on the deck awaiting the mess-call. But, as we walked among them—we did not go directly to our cabins, to avoid suspicion—we regarded all carelessly, laughing and joking as if we had not a burdensome thought in our minds. Twice we passed back and forth the full length of the deck, still joking and laughing. Then De Pont Brian and I went carelessly to our cabin and Goliath to his. No one had appeared to take any particular notice of us. In truth, they had hardly noticed us at all.

Now I had discovered what I thought would make an unusually good hiding-place for the casket and the emerald pyramid. One day, while De Pont Brian and I were roughing it in our cabin, I chanced to catch hold of the top of one of the heavy square posts that support my bunk, in such manner that I gave the top a violent twist. To my surprise it turned in my hand. In a moment my curiosity had discovered that the top would unscrew. I had it off in a jiffy. A large hole had been hollowed out in the post, evidently for the purpose of concealing something valuable, but now the hollow was empty.

"That hollow in the post will be the very place in which to hide the casket and the emerald pyramid!" I exclaimed, the instant I swung open the door of the cabin, and ran toward it.

"Wait!" cried De Pont Brian and sprang quickly to the one window of our small cabin. "We must take no chances; and, although this window opens directly on the ocean, yet a man might swing himself down from the deck so that he could look within," and he pulled down its heavy black shade. "We must now be constantly on our guard; for it is not only a question of the

loss of the casket and the jewels, but also of our very lives."

I found that the hole in the post was just large enow to slip the casket, with the emerald pyramid inside of it, down into it. This done, I carefully screwed on the top.

"There, I think that anyone could stand and look directly at that post and not dream that it was hollow and that within the hollow lay hidden a treasure more wonderful and valuable than that possessed by any king in Christendom!" I declared, as I stepped back a pace and carefully scrutinized the post. Not a line, not a mark of any kind, indicated that the post was hollow or that its top could be removed.

"Splendid!" exclaimed De Pont Brian. "Now, if I can only find as good a place to hide my portion of the treasure."

Eventually he made his hiding-place by very carefully removing a short board from one of the walls of our cabin. Then, placing the jewels he had in a strong canvas bag and tying a strong cord around the open end of the bag, he lowered it down into the space thus opened betwixt the two sides of the wall. The free end of the cord he fastened to a nail, driven inside the opening as far from the loosened board as he could reach. Thus, if by any chance, the loosened board should be discovered, there would be nothing to show that the jewels had been hidden there. So carefully did he do the work, that, when the jewels were hidden and the board back in its place, there was not a sign, not even a scratch to show what had been done there.

Thus we hid our portions of the treasure; and it seemed to both of us that better hiding-places could not have been found on board the ship. We felt confident that, search the room as they might, Monsieur Dis-

guised Voice and his two sailors, could not discover them.

Captain Cartier and Goliath also found what we all thought safe places of concealment for their portions of the treasure. But, at that time, we did not know against what a cunning, scheming, evil mind we had to arm ourselves and how—again my pen be running ahead of my tale, which is not a good thing for the tale. So I halt it and go back to our ships and our Great Adventure.

CHAPTER XVI

WE BEHOLD A STRANGE SEA MONSTER—AND ESCAPE A GREAT PERIL

AS you know, one of the purposes for which Captain Cartier undertook this voyage to the New World was to discover a shorter and better road for commerce to the riches of the East and the gold and the jewels of the Orient. He thought that the opening to this new road lay somewhere in the region where we were now, possibly through some stream or strait of water, flowing betwixt islands, or even through the mainland itself. Many rumors of such possible and unexplored openings had come to him; and he was now determined to explore all such that he found, until, if the good God should grant him that happy fortune, he found the right one.

"If it chance to be my good fortune to discover this shorter way to the Orient through the New World," he said one day to De Pont Brian and me, as we stood on deck, "it would be the greatest and most glorious service of my life to my King and Country and would doubtless bring me somewhat of honor and riches. It would shorten the road to those far and rich countries by many long leagues through the heat and the stormy waters of the torrid zones and would give to France a monopoly of their rich trade, whereby she would become the most prosperous and powerful nation in all Europe. But, even though we do not make this desired discovery, there be yet a great and unknown world for us to explore, wherein doubtless live many benighted

savages, to whom we can make known the blessings of our holy religion and the might and glory of our great King and Country. Then, all the lands, rivers, lakes, forest and mountains, which we explore, will, by right of such exploration, belong to the King and France, with all that lies therein. How great, then, will be the rejoicing of our King, if we return and lay a new and mighty empire at the foot of his throne! Aye, Yuon, De Pont Brian, this adventure on which we be now embarked, has the promise of great things; and, perchance, somewhat of glory and honor to all of us. What think you?" He stopped abruptly and fixed his glowing eyes on our faces.

Then, suddenly and before either De Pont Brian or I could answer a word, albeit both of us had been greatly stirred by the discourse of our captain, and eager words were crowding forward to the tips of our tongues, there came a great shouting and loud calls for Captain Cartier from a number of excited seamen who had run suddenly to the deck-rail and were now looking down toward the water with wondering and astounded eyes.

"Now, what do those wild seamen of mine see? Come, let us make haste to find out; for, by the looks of the eyes in their faces, some dread monster from the depths below us must have come up to the surface to take a look at them!" Captain Cartier exclaimed and hurried to where the men stood staring down at the water, with looks of fear and wonderment on their faces and excited exclamations coming from their mouths.

De Pont Brian and I, as you may well believe, made all haste to hurry along with him.

"Look! Look, Captain!" a man cried excitedly, as

we came near. "What manner of beast is that swimming in the water yonder, toward that small island which we but now forsook? Never before saw I the like of such a beast, if it be a beast and not some hideous monster from the depths below us. 'Sdeath! Look you at his two great tusks! They be big enow to tear a hole in the side of the ship itself! What be it, Captain, beast, fish or devil?" and he pointed with a big finger over the deck-railing.

By this time we had come to the railing and my eyes followed his pointing finger. I saw, to my great astoundment, swimming in the water a little distance from the ship, a very lion to my seeming, in shape, hair and color; yet he swam not after the manner of a beast by moving his feet, but rather sliding upon the water with his whole body in sight, excepting for his legs, which I could not see. Nor, as he swam, did he dive down sportively under the water and again rise to its surface, as do whales, dolphins, porpoises and all other kinds of fish; but he confidently showed himself above the surface, as if he had naught to fear, nor even hiding below it when we suddenly showed ourselves in open view and gestured and shouted to amaze him, as all other creatures are commonly amazed at the sudden sight of men. Thus he passed along on the surface of the water, turning his head to and fro, yawning and gaping wide, with ugly demonstration of long teeth and glaring eyes. When the ship was about to pass him, he showed so little fear of us that he suddenly turned, as if to bid us a farewell, and came right up against the side of our ship and sent forth a horrible voice, roaring and bellowing as doth a lion.

Now, I had been so astounded at the sight of a seeming lion, or fish shaped like a lion, swimming in the

ocean-sea, that so far I had stood staring down at the monster, like one dumbfounded. But, when he sent forth that great bellowing roar, it so startled me that I came as it were, quickly to life and turned wonderingly to Captain Cartier, who had been watching both my face and the face of De Pont Brian, with a grin on his own.

"What—what is that monster?" I asked. "Where did he come from? Is he fish or beast? Did you see his great tusks, almost as long as my arm? Tell me, did you ever see his like before?"

"Yes, often," laughed Captain Cartier. "On my first voyage to the New World I saw many of them and we killed a few. They are not as terrible as they look. They are variously called morse, sea-lion, sea-horse, sea-oxen.[1] Of a certainty, they be a strange-looking beast; for beast they be and cannot breathe under the water. The first one I saw astounded me as greatly as this one seems to have you and De Pont Brian. But we will soon see more of them, now that we have come into the region where they dwell, and you can then discover what manner of animals they be for yourselves. Now I have no more time to talk of them; for see you not that great wall of fog coming down upon us from out the northwest? 'Twill soon be thick around and over the ship. I know these north sea fogs. Also, there be huge masses of ice floating in these waters, veritable mountains, against which we must now be on our guard, lest our ship hit one of them in the fog and be broken to pieces and all on board sent to cold graves at the bottom of the sea—lower the sails," he shouted to Master Frosmont. "Down with all but enow to give the ship headway. We must move most cautiously when we get in the fog."

[1] The Walrus.—E. M.

By the time the sails were down, the fog was upon us, approaching and overwhelming the ship in a most marvelous manner, as if it were a great gray moving wall. In a moment I could not see half the length of the ship.

Captain Cartier, with Master Frosmont, moved quickly to the foredeck and there stood peering out into the gray darkness before them and listening intently, lest the ship be taken unawares by one of the huge cakes of ice. In one of these thick fogs the ears are of more worth than the eyes in guarding against these ice-mountains; for one can hear the slapping of the waves against their sides and the sound of the moving of their great masses through the water, before the eyes can see it.

We had often been in fogs since our coming into these cold northern waters; but never in one as thick as was this. I could actually feel the fog lying against my face somewhat like a wet cloth; and, as for seeing, 'twas like looking through thick gray smoke. There was almost no wind and the ship moved most slowly through the thick fog.

For, mayhap, four or five hours we thus sailed through the thick wetness of the air, seeing almost naught of what was before us, with Captain Cartier and Master Frosmont standing there on the deck almost motionless, ears and eyes intent. In truth, all on board were on guard with ears and eyes; for all knew our danger and none had a liking for a grave in that cold water!

Suddenly, I felt the wind against my cheek. At the same moment I heard a glad shout from Captain Cartier.

"A breeze! A breeze, men!" he cried. "'Twill soon blow this fog away."

A minute or two later my heart stopped within me. A great towering mass loomed up through the thinning fog directly in front of us.

"Ware! Ware the ice!" shouted Captain Cartier and leaped into action.

That was a most narrow escape for all of us. I shiver at the dread thought of it even now. Only the master seamanship of Captain Cartier saved us. As it was, our ship, which led the two other ships, passed so close to that great mass of ice, that I felt its cold breath on my face as we swept by. The other ships, warned in time, got past safely.

Almost the moment we came free of the ice, the fog broke and a stiff breeze carried it away. My eyes went at once to that mountain of ice, now floating majestically on the water to the east of us and only a short distance away. I never thought there could be so much ice in one great mass in the world! It towered mountain-high above the water. Now that the fog had gone, the full rays of a red and declining sun shone directly on it. I never saw before or since a more wonderful and beautiful sight than it made, with that red sunlight shining on it. From its top arose many sharply pointed pinnacles; down its sides poured cascading streams of water; in its surface yawned many fantastically shaped caverns; and over all, pointed pinnacles, cascading streams and yawning caves, shone the red sunlight. Think! all this pinnacled mountain on which the red sun shone was ice, crystal-clear ice, which reflected back the red light of the sun from ten thousand different points— I have not the skill in words to describe its wonders and beauties!

"It is the most marvelous sight I ever saw!" declared De Pont Brian, as he stood by my side staring at it,

awestruck. "It is a veritable mountain of ice! A miracle that we did not hit it!"

Now, at this time being but a youth and somewhat indifferent to such matters, I took little note of the passing of time, nor of the various directions in which we sailed, as a good sailor should, nor do I remember many of the names which Captain Cartier gave to the islands, coasts, harbors, capes, bays, inlets, etc., which we passed or entered into; for, as you must know, we were now sailing in a new world where few names had been given to anything. A youth remembers that which touches his own interests most and little else; and, since I be writing this from my recollections of what happed to me when I was a boy, I can write down now only what was then fixed in that boy's memory. I thought it best to set these things down here, so that you can understand why I go so swiftly over this part of our explorations. In truth there was little worth the telling, since all this coast and these many islands were each very much like the other and all very barren, so that when I have described one of a kind I have described all. Likewise, I wish this to explain and make my excuses for any errors in time or geography, which may unawares creep into my tale, now or hereafter. Having thus eased my conscience, I go on with my story.

About this time we came into a great and goodly gulf, with many islands in it and passageways and entrances and outlets, so that, in whatsoever way the wind blew us, we had a good way in or out. Captain Cartier named this great gulf St. Lawrence, his Bay. But we did not then explore it; and went out from it, sailing westward, and discovered a cape.[1]

[1] North Cape on Anticosti Island.—E. M.

Our two wild men, Taignoagny and Domagaia, told Captain Cartier that this was a part of the southern coast and that there was an island which pointed out the way to go from Honguedo [1] to Canada; and that two days' journey from the said cape and island began the Kingdom of Saguenay, which extended on the north shore westward toward Canada.

It was while we were at this place that we saw so vast a number of whales sporting about in the water that it seemed to me they must have gathered hither from all the great ocean-seas. I had no thought before that there were such prodigious monsters on the face of the earth! They seemed almost like small islands as they rested their great bulks on top of the water. They did not appear to have any fear of us; but swam boldly about our ships, as if, in their turn, they would know what manner of great fishes we were. In truth, one of them did startle me greatly, by suddenly shooting up out of the water so near to our ship, (as if he were minded to have a good look at us) that, when his great bulk came down, ker-slap, on the water, he splashed about a hogsheadful of ice-cold water on De Pont Brian and me, who were hugging the deck-rail, as close to the whales as we could get. This caused great merriment among the ship's crew. Even Captain Cartier laughed heartily and a great roar came from Goliath.

The next day, or, mayhap, a day or two later, we passed through a strait and saw certain lands to the south, which were full of very great and high hills. From here we could also see other lands to the north. Betwixt these southerly and northly coasts there was a distance of some twenty-five or thirty leagues.

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[1] Gaspé.—E. M.

The wild men said that thither was the beginning of Saguenay,[1] which was an inhabited country and that thence came the red copper of which they had told Captain Cartier. They also said that thither was the beginning of a great river, which they called Hochelago [2] and which made a road to Canada.[3] They declared that the water in this river became fresh at Canada and so continued from there on inland; and that they had never heard of any man who had gone to the head of it, where it was thought it became so narrow that there was no farther passage save for small boats.

"Surely, Captain Cartier," broke in De Pont Brian eagerly at this point, "you will now explore this great river. Mayhap it be the very passage to the Orient for which you search; and—and the soles of my feet do ache to trod dry land again!"

"No," he answered, "this great river cannot be that road; for the wild men do affirm that there be no passageway by it through the land and that its water turns fresh at Canada and so continues thereafter. This would not be so, if it were that strait or passage for which we search betwixt the two oceans, both of which have salt in their waters. We will first explore the coasts which I have not seen in this region of the great St. Lawrence Gulf, to see if there might not be a passageway betwixt these lands. If we come upon no opening here, I know not where to look further; and, in pursuance of my King's command to explore this unknown land, I will then go up this great river; for I, also tire of the feel of a deck always beneath my feet and I would know

[1] The name they gave to the country westward from the river of that name.—E. M.

[2] The wild men's name for the St. Lawrence River.—E. M.

[3] The name Canada is believed to have come from Cannata, an Iroquois word for a small collection of dwellings, a settlement.—E. M.

what lies in the interior, where no white men have been."

So we sailed again on our quest for that passageway, to the great disappointment of at least De Pont Brian and me; for, in truth, we were both somewhat wearied of roaming in these wild and desolate waters of the North, where cold fogs and rains chilled our blood and our eyes saw only the dreary waste of water and the barren shores of gloomy and forbidding lands. We were eager to get on the mainland, to discover what manner of people, animals, rivers, lakes, forest and mountains were there, to do some real exploring, as we thought of it.

CHAPTER XVII

THE EVIL THREE

NOW, after we had sailed about for some two weeks in the region of the great St. Lawrence Gulf, ever searching for that passageway to the Indies and finding no opening whatsoever that had any promise in it, Captain Cartier at length became satisfied that there was no such passageway in this place and turned his thought to that great river of which the two wild men had told him. He made further inquiries concerning it of them; and, finding that, in truth, it was a very great river, flowing from afar out from that mysterious and unknown New World, which the King had sent him to explore, he determined to go up it, so far as its waters would take his three ships. This the more because the wild men told him that it flowed through many and beautiful countries, past great mountains and mighty forests, wherein dwelt many people, who had never seen, nor even heard of white men and their great ships and who would welcome him and his men like brothers and marvel greatly at his ships and guns. Accordingly he now directed his course toward the mouth of that great river, which the two savages called Hochelago.

I think every man on board the three ships rejoiced at the thought of seeing other human beings than themselves, albeit but savages, and tall trees and green grass and fair and fertile countries again; and gave little or no thought to the possible perils and hardships which might confront them in that unknown land. I

know that De Pont Brian and I gave not a thought at all to them, being carried away by the greatness of the adventure itself.

"Think, Yuon!" he said, after Captain Cartier had come to this decision and our ships had been speeding on their way for some little time. "We will be the very first white men to sail up this river, to explore this country, to see its people and animals. Now," and I could hear his eagerness in his voice, "how long think you it will be before we come to this great river. I am most eager to get to it."

"I know not," I answered. "Let us go and ask Captain Cartier. I saw him on the foredeck but a minute agone, with the two wild men by his side. They guide him through these unknown waters."

When we came in sight of our captain, we saw that he and the two wild men were looking and pointing landward and talking in an excited manner.

"What is it? What do you see?" I cried out, as we ran quickly to where they were standing.

"Look!" Captain Cartier answered, pointing, "there at the farthest bounds of these low lands, which we have been passing Taignoagny says that a river comes down into the sea, with such prodigious force and volume that we can feel the force of its current here, a good league from its mouth. He declares that should we dip down into this current even now, we would bring up fresh water out of the very midst of the salt water, but I doubt it."

"Let me try!" I cried out and, without waiting for permission, I ran quickly to get a small bucket and rope.

In two minutes more I had the bucket at the end of a rope and had lowered it down into the water, which I now saw was moving swiftly from the direction of

the land. In another minute I had the bucket of water up on deck and had raised it to my lips.

"It is, it is fresh!" I cried. "Taste it! Taste it, Captain Cartier! It is as fresh as the water in the fountain of the Court at St. Malo!" and I held out the bucket.

Captain Cartier at once drank from it.

"Yuon is right!" he exclaimed. "It is as fresh as any fountain water. Drink," and he passed the bucket to De Pont Brian.

Thence it went the rounds and we all marveled that the water should still be fresh so far from where the river entered the salt sea.

"Is it that great river to which we go?" and I turned excitedly to Taignoagny.

"No," he answered, shaking his head emphatically. "Hochelago much bigger water, much wider. This Hochelago's papoose," and he grinned.

"I am minded to visit Hochelago's papoose in one of the small boats," laughed Captain Cartier, "Wouldst go with me, Yuon, De Pont Brian?" and his eyes twinkled.

"Aye! Aye!" we both answered, with a joyous shout.

"Then make yourselves ready at once."

When we came to the mouth of the river, we saw many strange monsters sporting in its water, which greatly aroused our wonder; for to us they seemed to be neither fish nor beast, but a monstrous cross betwixt the two, as if a half lion and half fish had come to live in the sea. But, when we came nearer, we saw that they were like the monster with the great tusks, which we had seen swimming alongside our ship and which we had thought like to a lion which had turned fish.

"Did I not tell you that we would soon come on more of these strange beasts?" laughed Captain Car-

tier. "Look, there lieth one stretched out on the sand. Now you can solve the mystery of their legs."

"He has none!" we both cried out in astoundment. "Only broad, flat flippers and a fishlike tail, somewhat like a seal's. But, see his great tusks, which come down from his nose like to the two points of a great white mustache. They must be nearly two feet long. Of a certainty I should not like him to make a lunge at me with them!"

We made inquiries concerning them of the two wild men and they told us that they swim in the water all day long and at night flop themselves out of the water very awkwardly and lie on the rocks and sand all night. Truly, as Captain Cartier said, they be a strange animal.

We entered the river but did not go far up it, for the current was so powerful that our oarsmen made little headway against it and the night was already near. Nathless, we saw what a great river it was and with what swiftness it ran into the sea.

That night, as De Pont Brian and I stood on the deck watching the splendors of a full moon and talking over the adventures of the day, Goliath came up slowly to where we were standing and took his station by our sides and looked up solemnly at the moon.

"Captain Cartier's cabin was searched to-day, while he was out in the boat," he said, speaking, so low that only De Pont Brian and I could hear him.

"Did—did they find the jewels?" we both asked as if with one voice, greatly startled.

"Hush! Hush! Not so loud. Look not so startled. We may be watched."

"But the jewels?" And, in my excitement, I caught hold of his arm.

"Let go of my arm. Do not touch me. Show no ex-

citement. Evil eyes may be watching us. Look off over the water—at the moon—while we talk, as if nothing troubled us."

I quickly took my hand from his arm and the three of us looked off over the water; as if we thought and talked only of the beauties of the moon and the sea.

"Now, quick, what of the jewels?" whispered De Pont Brian, without turning his head.

"They are safe. The saints protected them! They seem not to have been disturbed; but we cannot tell of a certainty. If you will remember, they were to leave the jewels untouched where they were, if they found them, until we sailed for home. But Captain Cartier knows that his cabin was searched. He is a very methodical man and he always hangs his coats in a certain order in the small closet in his cabin. His gray everyday coat comes first; then his blue storm coat, with the large brass buttons; then his officer's coat, with its white lace and red silk facings; then, carefully covered with a cloth to protect it, his grand court coat, with its rich silk, its white lace and gold buttons and bright colors, truly a magnificent coat. He has hung these coats in this order in his closet for years. I know, for have I not myself hung them there many times?

"To-day, when he returned from his visit to that swift river, he found this order in which he hung his coats completely disarranged. Not a coat hung in its proper place. Wherefore, he knows that someone has been in his cabin and disarranged them while searching it, albeit, not another thing in the cabin appears to have been disturbed. He is in a great rage and vows that he will hang the first man he catches unbidden in his cabin to the highest yard-arm on his ship— Control yourselves!" I think we both looked at that moment as

if we were about to blurt out excited questions. "None but ourselves must think that we know that his cabin has been searched. Captain Cartier bid me tell you to be on your guard and to so arrange matters that no one can search your cabin without your knowing it and to do it in such a manner that the searchers would not think they had betrayed themselves. In the morning he will talk with you and——"

But, here a sudden thought came to me, which my great interest in what Goliath was saying had kept from coming before, and I turned quickly to De Pont Brian.

"What of our cabin?" I exclaimed. "Mayhap, it also has been searched and the casket and the jewels found!

De Pont Brian jumped at my words and, with a muttered exclamation, started on the run for our cabin and I was not three paces behind him, despite the cautious cries of Goliath to go slow. Fortunately we had not far to go and it was late. I am quite sure that no one saw us make that race to our cabin.

The instant we were inside I sprang to my bunk-post and De Pont Brian to his loosened board. My hands were all of a-tremble with excitement and fear of what I might find, as they started to unscrew the top of the post. To me it seemed to be a little more loosely fastened than what I had left it the last time I had looked at the casket and a feverish haste took possession of me and I had the top of the post off in a trice.

"The casket is still here!" I cried out joyously, as I thrust my hand down into the hollow and pulled it out and opened it. "And—and the emerald pyramid is in its place!" I think my sigh of relief could have been heard on deck.

"And my jewels are still safe—every one of them!"

came the glad voice of De Pont Brian. "Now we must make sure that no one searched our cabin, if we can, during our absence. Remember, they were to leave no signs of their searchings."

For a good half-hour we searched; but not a sign could we discover that anyone had been in our cabin. At any rate the casket and the jewels were safe; but it troubled us not to know for a certainty whether or not a search of our cabin had been made; and we determined forthwith to prepare the means of knowing in the future.

The best way to do this we decided, after giving the matter considerable thought, would be, when going out for any length of time, to arrange the bed-clothes on each of our bunks in a certain manner, so that if anyone disturbed them while we were away, we would know it when we came back. We reasoned that in our little bare cabin, the bunks would be the first places to be searched. In truth, there seemed to be hardly any other place to hide anything. In addition we decided, each time before going out, to take note of how the few movable articles in the room were placed, so that, if we found any of them out of place when we returned, we would know that somebody had been in the room. Then, for a blind, we loosened a short board in the floor, but not enow to take it out without difficulty, but enow to show faint marks of its loosening, and placed over it, as if to hide it, a small rug we had made from a few imperfect ermine skins of those we had gathered, as I have afore mentioned.

"I would like to see their faces," grinned De Pont Brian, "when they lift up these ermine skins and see this apparently loosened board."

"And I," I laughed, "when they pry the board up, not

without difficulty, and find naught there. Besides, they are quite sure to leave marks of their prying, to tell us they have been here."

I did yet another thing, so that I could make sure if they found my casket. I screwed up the top of my bunk-post tightly and then I made a scratch with a small pin lengthwise of the post, in such manner that it showed, but faintly, both on the top of the post, which came off, and the part below it, like one scratch. Now, I felt most certain, if anyone removed the top, that, when he replaced it again, he would not leave it so that the two parts of the scratch fitted exactly together. I took pride in this little trick, which came of my own thinking; and De Pont Brian also thought it a shrewd artifice.

Evidently the crude lock on our doors would not bother them. Captain Cartier had a better lock on his door. So we left it as it was. Then, we did not wish them to know we had any suspicions, should they search our cabin, of their doing so; and a new lock, or any tampering with the old lock, would at once tell them that we were on our guard.

We both now felt that, with all these precautions, there was little chance of anyone searching our cabin without our knowing it; and we went into our bunks very well satisfied with ourselves and our precautions.

In the morning, when we went to Captain Cartier, we found him still in a rage over the thought that anyone should dare to enter and search his own cabin during his absence. His rage was all the greater, for the want of anyone to vent it on.

"If I catch him, I'll hang him higher than ever King Ahasuerus hanged Haman!" he declared, as he walked wrathfully up and down his cabin. "'Tis outrageous! But let me once get hold of him! Aye, but let me catch

him, and I'll teach him to come poking around in my cabin!" His wrath increased as he talked. I never saw Captain Cartier before in such a rage. Suddenly he whirled about to De Pont Brian and me.

"And you? Was your cabin searched?"

"Not that we could discover," I answered.

Then I told him how we had arranged matters, so that, if any search of our cabin was made, we would know it.

"Shrewdly done! I'll do likewise," he affirmed. "Now we four must be on the watch all the time, to see if we cannot catch one of them at work. There is little else we can do, seeing that the casket and the jewels are not to be stolen, even if found, until we are on our way home. They be safe for the present, unless the expectant thieves discover that we know they are after the casket and the jewels. Then they might take them at anytime. So we must continue to act as if we had no thought that anyone besides ourselves had any knowledge of our treasure. But the scoundrels! The infernal villains! To search their own commander's cabin! Let me but catch them at it!" Again his rage got the better of him and again he began pacing wrathfully up and down his cabin floor. Suddenly he checked himself.

"I be acting like an undisciplined boy! I'll be better for a walk on deck. Now you two go about your business as usual. Show not a sign that anything unusual has happened."

CHAPTER XVIII

WILD MEN

NOW for some days we sailed along the rugged coasts of the great St. Lawrence Gulf, seeking the mouth of that mighty river, of which the wild men had told us. We passed by the mouths of some swift and large rivers and each time we thought we had come to the Great River; but these, the two wild men said, were but papooses to the river we sought, which caused us all to marvel. Also, we were astounded to find that this gulf had so great a bigness, as if, in very truth, it were a sea by itself, with many big and little islands and encompassed about with barren lands of rock and sand and a wild loneliness.

Then came that morning, when De Pont Brian and I went on deck early. At once we felt a difference in the air. It seemed cooler, fresher; and, when we looked down over the deck-railing, we saw that the water was moving swiftly out toward the sea and that it did not have the look of ocean water. It was not as blue and clear. Also the land had come nearer to us on both sides, albeit, it was yet a long way off, and showed very high and steep hills of bare stones; yet, notwithstanding, a great quantity of tall trees, as green as possibly could be, did grow up from these bare stones, even as if they made a good and fertile ground. For a moment we both stared around us, hardly believing our own eyes, so different was the scene from what it had been when we had gone to our bunks. Then we looked into each other's faces.

"Is it, is it the Great River at last?" I cried.

"It must be," answered De Pont Brian. "See, we be no longer in a gulf of the sea; but in a great and swift river coming down to the ocean betwixt wide-apart shores. Where is Captain Cartier? He should know of this!"

Our eyes swiftly swept the deck. Captain Cartier was not in sight; and none of the dullard seamen on deck seemed to have noted any change.

"Quick!" I cried. "We will run and call him. He was up late last night and, perchance, has overslept," and we both ran to his cabin and began pounding on the door.

"Wake! Wake!" we shouted. "While we slept, our ships found that Great River! Come on deck and see with your own eyes!"

We heard a startled grunt, like that of some huge animal, then the door of Goliath's cabin, which was next to that of Captain Cartier, was flung open and the tousled head of the giant thrust out, the three braids of his black beard standing out almost straight from his chin above a white night-shirt. Truly he made a most comical appearance and one at which I would have laughed heartily at another time.

"What say you?" he roared. "That we have come to that Great River? Then, by St. Venus, out I go to see it with my own eyes, night-shirt and all!" and he threw wide open the door and bolted for the deck, dressed as he was.

"The Great River! Art sure? I'll be with you in a minute. Damn this shirt!" now came the excited voice of Captain Cartier and a moment later he rushed out of his cabin, with his coat half on. "Send the two wild men to me on deck!" he shouted to a sailor staring stupidly

at us, and ran to the deck, getting into the remainder of his coat as he ran.

You may be sure that De Pont Brian and I were at his side, when he reached the deck.

For a moment he stood there, sniffing the air, staring over the railing at the swiftly moving water below, at the high rocky hills on either side of us, at the tall trees, which clothed their rocks with green, then he turned to us, his eyes shining.

"It is that great river, Hochelago, at last, I verily believe!" he exclaimed; "but we must await the coming of the two wild men, before we know of a certainty. What a mighty river it is! What a great country it must flow through!" and his eyes swept over the broad waters of the river to the far-reaching shores beyond. Truly a country that can bring forth such a river, must be well worth discovering and exploring! We will adventure up this river and see what God hath sent us—Here come the wild men!

At that moment Taignoagny and Domagaia came running up to where we stood, pointing excitedly here and there to the shore with their hands and talking in their own barbarous language to each other in a most explosive manner, as they ran. In truth, Captain Cartier had to catch hold of Taignoagny's shoulder and shake him violently before he would give any attention to his excited inquiries.

"Is it that great river of which you have told us such wonders?" he demanded, as soon as he had the wild man's attention; "that great river which flows through the Kingdoms of Saguenay and Canada? that river which comes down from a land so far off that you have never heard of any man going to its head? Is this that river?"

For a moment the excited eyes of Taignoagny passed swiftly over the waters of the river and up and down the length of the wide-stretching shores, then he turned to Captain Cartier, his eyes glowing with a look I had never expected to see in him, the look of a wanderer returning to his native land.

"He great river, Hochelago," he said. "You come my land. I swell with gladness," and he placed a hand over his heart— And I had thought these savages had no sentiments!

"By my great bow and the three tails of my black beard, 'tis a mighty river!" here broke in the big voice of Goliath. "But, nathless, its air be somewhat chilly for a man in his shirt-tails. I go to remedy this unseemly matter," and he hastened to his cabin to get into warmer clothing.

We all laughed heartily and the sailors, who had gathered around us, gave him a cheer, as he vanished.

"It seems good, does it not, Yuon?" and De Pont Brian turned a pair of glowing eyes to my face, "to look over the deck-rail and see high hills covered with green trees, in place of wild and restless water and the gloomy shores of barren islands and desolate coasts. Doubtless, birds sing in the branches of these trees and flowers bloom in their open places and——"

"And doubtless savages lurk in their dark recesses, eager to seize and thrust us into their soup kettles, if we but go ashore," I broke in. "Goliath says that all these savages be cannibals and do love best young white meat. Mayhap, it has a more pleasant flavor then—" I suggested.

"Oh shut up, Yuon," laughed De Pont Brian. "Goliath does not know what he is talking about. He has never been into the interior of the country and

knows naught of its savages. But, what matter it if they be cannibals? The greater the peril of the adventure, the greater the merit of its accomplishment. 'Tis a great thought to think that we go now where no white men have ever been before, that we be the first, the very first white men to discover and explore this great river. For the glory and honor of that I would adventure much, even the soup kettles of these savages, if there be need."

"Spoken like a true adventurer and explorer!" and Captain Cartier laid a warm hand on his shoulder. "Yet there is still a greater thought than your thought. We go to open up a New World, to make a road for others to follow into its wildernesses. We go to bring the blessings of religion and the hopes of civilization to these benighted savages. We go to give our King and Country a great empire. So mighty a volume of water as flows betwixt the banks of this river, must come from out a great and fertile land. Think of what this land will become, when Frenchmen till its soil, build its villages and great cities, rule its people! Truly, it is a great thought to be the first white man to see this great river; but it is a greater to think that we be the beginners of a great empire here in this New World. It doth honor and gives glory to all of us, to serve but as pathfinders for so great undertakings—Ah, here I go dreaming again. Methinks that an explorer is ever a dreamer. God grant that my dreams come true!"

"Amen!" cried both De Pont Brian and I, as if with one tongue, for we had been greatly stirred by the noble words of our captain.

Thus it was that we were the first white men that

ever saw this great river, which our two wild men told us was called Hochelago.[1]

By now nearly every man on board ship had come on deck and were crowding the deck-railing, all eager to see this new and strange land and all talking excitedly and pointing out its wonders. Suddenly, in the midst of this confusion of voices, I heard a great shouting from our two wild men and saw them standing at the highest point of the foredeck, pointing excitedly up the river. At the same time there came a great roar from Goliath, who was now back on deck, fully dressed.

"Wild men! Wild men! Four boats full of them!" he yelled and pointed with his great arm up the river.

Then I, too, saw the wild men. They had just come around a point of out-jutting rocks, four long boats full of them. At sight of our great ships, with their white sails bellowing out to the breeze, and the strange-looking men on board of them, they uttered cries of astoundment and fear; and, at first, were for flight back up the river. In truth some of them did whirl their boats about and start back up the river as fast as they could go; but others, greatly curious, for they had never seen, nor heard tell of such strange things before in their lives, came slowly and fearfully toward us, pausing now and then to stare at us in manifest wonder, as if we had come in our ships from an other world.

Our two wild men continued to call to them in the savage language; and, gaining confidence, because they heard words they could understand, they presently came so near us that they might easily hear and understand. Taignoagny then told them his name and that he and Domagaia were the same two countrymen of theirs, who had gone away with Captain Cartier the year be-

[1] This, of course, is the St. Lawrence River.—E. M.

fore and had now come back with him, with their mouths filled with the marvels they had seen.

This talk gave them still more confidence and increased their curiosity and they came so close to us in their boats that we could all see plainly what manner of men they were, but they were still too fearful to come on board the ships.

As you may well believe, De Pont Brian and I now watched them with all our eyes, as the saying goes, so long as they were near our ships. They were strong- and sturdy-looking fellows, with a dark and somewhat reddish skin, black straight hair, curiously decorated with feathers—in truth, in all their looks very much like our own two wild men, whom I have afore described. For weapons they had bows and arrows and a heavy axlike club, made of stone, shaped like an ax and tied on the end of a stout stick. I thought this a most curious weapon and to be greatly feared in a hand-to-hand encounter. They wore almost no clothing and the little they had on was made from the skin of animals and ragged and dirty.

"Well, what do you think, Yuon, of our savage friends?" and De Pont Brian turned to me with a grin on his face. "Wouldst like to share cabin and table with one of them?"

"Ugh! I would not," I answered emphatically, my stomach beginning to feel queer at the very thought of it.

We did not pause to hold converse with these savages, and, in a short time, they had passed from our sight; but, so interested were De Pont Brian and I in watching the ever-changing shores of this New World, as they passed before our eyes, that we remained on deck for three or four hours longer. Then, as I stood there, a

sudden chill of dread went down my back and I turned quickly to De Pont Brian.

"Dullards that we be!" I exclaimed excitedly. "We have left our cabin unguarded for these three hours, without a human being in sight of it and a great excitement chaining all on deck! What a chance for the Evil Three!"

With a startled exclamation De Pont Brian whirled about from the deck-rail—and paused.

"Quiet, Yuon," he whispered, without looking toward me. "We must go quietly, as if in no undue haste, to our cabin," and he linked his arm in mine and together we walked slowly away toward our cabin. The moment we were inside and the door closed, I leaped to my bunk-post and my eyes went to that small scratch.

"Bless the saints!" I called to De Pont Brian, "the scratch is all right."

"So is the loosened board," he called back. "But the picture we hung over it hangs straight, not a little askew, as we purposely left it."

My heart jumped at these words and with swift hands I began unscrewing the top of the bunk-post. In a jiffy I had it off. The casket was still there! In another moment I had it out of the hollow and had opened it.

The emerald pyramid looked up at me in all its glorious splendor!

"Everything all right here," I called joyously.

"The same here, so far as the jewels are concerned; but I am almost sure the room has been searched. See, the bunk-clothes lie not the way we left them and——"

De Pont Brian sprang to the small ermine-skin rug on the floor and jerked it aside. It took but a glance to tell both of us that the board had been removed and somewhat hastily replaced. Our trap, then, had worked!

CHAPTER XIX

WE VISIT THE SAVAGES—THE EVIL THREE AGAIN

THE great river now flowed before us. Whence it came, through what countries it poured its flood of waters, what hazards lay beneath its surface, what perils from savage men and beasts lined its shores, we knew not. Nathless, Captain Cartier did not hesitate. Knowing well that he took his own life and the lives of all with him in his hands, as it were, he yet determined to venture all and to sail on up this unknown river, with no better pilots than the two wild men, who themselves knew but little about the river and its perils, especially for ships as great as ours. I am sure that all on board the three ships were eager to make the venture with him, albeit none were blind to the hazards of such a voyage into the unknown. Something there was in the thought of the greatness of the adventure that had now taken possession of all of us, even the most ignorant of the seamen. Hence it was with glad hearts and most curious eyes that we now continued on our way up the great river.

The country bordering the river was now very beautiful and fertile-looking, with grass-covered hills and valleys and great forests, with tall and fine trees. We passed many islands, small and great, all well-wooded and rich with ripening fruits. We paused at some of these to go ashore; but had no adventures worthy of recording here on any of them. I wondered greatly why we saw so few savages along the shores; and those we

did see showed so great fear of us, that, in their haste to get out of our sight, they seemed to disappear before our very eyes. When I spoke wonderingly of this to Captain Cartier he laughed.

"Doubtless, Yuon, at this very moment there be hundreds of black and very curious and fearful eyes watching our every movement from behind the rocks and bushes and trees of yonder shore; yet, look we our sharpest, we cannot see one of them. They be very cunning in such concealments, even as wild beasts are, and can seemingly disappear and appear before one's very eyes. Think, how great a wonder we must seem to these wild men, who have never before seen men with white skins and dressed as we are; nor great ships, with wide-spreading sails, which move so mysteriously over the water, without hand or paddle moving them. They be poor ignorant creatures——"

"But, what kind of beings do you suppose they think we are?" I interrupted, so greatly curious that I forgot my manners.

"Mayhap, gods or devils or good or evil spirits, at least something greater than they be; and, therefore, to be greatly feared, until they know us friendly. Wherefore, at the first opportunity, it behoves us to show them that we be friendly. Now, Yuon," and his eyes went sharply to my face, "has no thought come to you as to who that man with the disguised voice, overheard by Old Joshua, might be?"

"I have had thoughts, as doubtless we all have had, Captain Cartier," I answered after a moment's thinking. "But it be a most serious thing to voice a suspicion that a man, mayhap a gentleman, may be a thief, perchance, if need be, a murderer. Wherefore, I give such thoughts,

if they come to me, no voice, until I have, at least, a modicum of proof."

"You do right, Yuon," he answered. "But these evil men trouble me sorely and enrage me greatly that I cannot lay hands on them. I——"

While we had been thus talking, our ship, which was in the lead and close to the north shore, swung around a great rock that advanced some little way into the river and we saw a small flock of islands sitting on the water ahead of us, like so many great ducks, with one much larger than the others among them. It was the sight of these islands that had abruptly stopped our talk of the Evil Three.

"Look! Look!" I cried, pointing to the large island. "Look at the savages in their boats fishing, at the women and children moving about on the land, at their huts a little way back from the water, under the shade of the great trees. Truly a peaceful scene. Ah-h-h! They see us!"

At this moment the savages caught sight of our three ships coming up the river toward them. For a minute they stared at us without moving, as if they could not believe their own eyes. Then, the next minute, all in the boats uttered astounded cries and fled to the shore, some spurred by so great a fear that they leaped overboard and thus went yelling and swimming and plunging to the land. The women and children ran and hid themselves in the woods, which here came down close to the water; and thence, doubtless, their keen black eyes, round and big with wonder and curiosity, watched us. The men gathered in excited groups along the shore, pointing and looking at us in great wonder and fear; but their curiosity kept them chained to the shore, despite their fears, even when we passed quite close to

them and came to anchor betwixt the great island and the northerly shore of the mainland.

All this had greatly interested De Pont Brian and me. We had stood on deck and watched the savages with so absorbing an interest and curiosity that even our tongues had been silent, while we sailed along the shore past the savages. But, now that we had come to anchor, a great desire to know what was in the mind of Captain Cartier, quickly loosened my tongue.

"Do we now go ashore, Captain Cartier?" I asked eagerly the moment our ship came to rest. "I want to get closer to those savages, where I can see them better."

"Yes," he answered, smiling at my eagerness. "You and De Pont Brian go to your cabins and make yourselves ready to go with me. Look your bravest. Wear your corselets and helmets and be sure that they be brightly burnished. These savages be like children. They love bright things and colors. Come armed with harquebuses, pistols and swords. I wish to make as striking an impression on the wild men as possible." He stepped close to where we stood, as if to get a better view of a certain part of the shore and lowered his voice. "Be sure and leave your cabin so that you can tell, if anyone searches it during your absence," he whispered, looking shoreward. "Goliath and I will do likewise. Also, I will leave none on board but those who are to guard the ship, with strict orders that all these remain on deck every moment during our absence, to guard against surprise by the savages—and to make certain that none of them has opportunity to search our cabins unknown. Now, get you to your cabin and quickly make yourselves ready, for we go in half an hour."

"I wonder if it is all for show that Captain Cartier

wishes us to go fully armed and to wear our corselets and helmets," De Pont Brian said, when we had entered our cabin. "Looks as if there might be at least five hundred savages on that big island alone and I saw savages on some of the other islands, who could get to us quickly in their boats. I suspect he is fearful of trouble, with so many savages, and means to go prepared to meet it more than half way, like the cautious man that he is. What do you think, Yuon?"

"I disagree somewhat with you, Claude," I answered. "I think his object is to so impress these savages with our power and greatness, that they would not dare attack us, even if they were so minded; and for this reason I do not believe we will have any trouble with these savages. They will stand in too great fear and awe of us. Mayhap, they will even take us for gods. Do I look like a god, Claude?"

By this time I had my brightly burnished corselet on, and, as I spoke these words, I placed the helmet on my head and tried to look as much like a god as possible, but, never having seen a god, I fear I made a failure of it. At least De Pont Brian laughed heartily at me and said I looked more like a clown, with a shining steel belly and an iron pot on his head, than I did like any god he had ever seen. "But," he added, grinning, "it may be that they will at least take you for some pot-bellied spirit and so do you honor."

Thus we lightheartedly talked and joked, as we excitedly made ready for our first venture on land among the savages.

At length we were ready to go on deck, after having very carefully arranged things in the little room so that we would know, when we came back, if any search of it had been made during our absence, I being especially

careful to see that the two scratches on my bunk-post were in exact alinement.

On deck we found all things in readiness to go ashore. I thought Captain Cartier looked very grand and imposing in his shining corselet and helmet and likewise the officers and men, who were arranged in military order on deck. A glance at the other two ships showed that like preparations were going on on them. Evidently Captain Cartier intended to make a full display of his power. I could see that the savage warriors, now crowding close to the shore, watched our preparations with wondering and uneasy eyes and with many backward glances toward the woods, as if it would take but little more to send them all hurrying thither.

Suddenly, with a swift glance around, Captain Cartier raised his hand. Instantly a bugle sounded and we were off. The moment we set foot on shore all the savages fled to the edge of the woods, nor would any of them come nigh us, until our two wild men, who were dressed for the occasion in all their cast-off fineries of the court nobles and thought themselves very fine and grand, called to them, at the bidding of Captain Cartier. They told them that they were the same Taignoagny and Domagaia, who had gone with Captain Cartier to France the year before and now had come back to them, with many great tales to tell of the wonders they had seen. They bade the savages have no fear of Captain Cartier and his men, who all wished to be friendly with them and who had many wonders to show and many gifts to give them.

When the savages heard these words, spoken in a language they could understand, and had made sure, by the asking of certain questions, that Taignoagny and Domagaia were the very same men they said they were,

of whom they had heard tell, their fears quickly fled from them and they began to rejoice greatly, dancing and chanting in a most gladsome manner and showing us many curious ceremonies, none of which I could understand, save that all were meant to declare their goodwill toward us and their happiness at our coming and at the return of Taignoagny and Domagaia.

At length, when their rejoicing had begun somewhat to abate, several of their chiefest men came to our boats, bringing us eels and other sorts of fish, with two or three loads of a kind of grain, wherewith they make their bread, together with many muskmelons, very sweet and pleasant to the taste, and in other ways manifested the great joy they had at our coming.

De Pont Brian and I were vastly amused by the interest all the savages took in Goliath and by the big bowman's manner of receiving their attentions. In very truth, dressed in his brightly burnished corselet and helmet, his massive arms bared to the huge shoulders, his great bow in his hand, his quiver of long arrows on his back, his huge knife and pistol in his belt, he did make a most fearsome and terrible figure of a man, his helmet towering nearly a foot above every other head. Truly I think the savages must have taken him for some sort of a god, from the looks of awe and reverence and fear they cast upon him. They did not go near enow to him to touch any part of his body; and they looked at his great black beard, with its three black braids of hair thrusting themselves out from his face in a most belligerent manner, with such awe-struck and fearsome looks in their eyes, as if it were to them the very sign of his godship, that both De Pont Brian and I laughed and even Captain Cartier chuckled. This we saw angered

Goliath, whereat we laughed the louder, which, in good sooth, was somewhat rudely done.

Then, even as we looked, one of the savages threw himself prostrate on the ground before the giant and began to chant something, doubtless a petition of some kind, which filled Goliath with so sore a disgust and rage that he reached down a great hand and plucked up the savage by the back of the girdle of his breech-clout and held him up dangling in the air, his legs and arms wiggling in a most funny manner. The girdle suddenly broke and let the savage fall to the ground, sans breech-clout. With a yell of terror he jumped to his feet and ran, yelping like a hurt cur and not looking where he ran, doubtless the most frightened savage in all the New World. After this, not a savage would approach Goliath nearer than a good ten feet, albeit their looks of worship and awe appeared to increase.

Now, when the savages were done with their dancing and ceremonies, Captain Cartier, in his turn, wishing still further to impress the savages, had his officers and men go through certain military evolutions, to the great delight and admiration of the wild men, at the end of which he caused the sudden and unexpected firing of a dozen harquebuses.

The unexpected coming of this great sound, the sight of the smoke and fire shooting out of the very bodies of the men, or so it seemed to do to the savages, who had never seen nor heard a gun fired before, gave so great and sudden a terror to all of them, that each did leap up into the air and then whirl about and ran, as if the devil himself had hold of his breech-clout. Nor did any stop until they came to the edge of the woods, when, hearing no more of that great thunderous sound and seeing us all unharmed and laughing at their fears, they took courage

and slowly returned to us, a great amaze on their faces.

Captain Cartier evidently thought that this was the proper dramatic moment to return with his men to the ships and accordingly gave orders to that effect.

So great had been my interest in the savages and in all that had happened on the shore, that not a thought of the casket and the jewels had entered my head, until my feet touched the deck. Then all came back to me. I saw that Captain Cartier, De Pont Brian and Goliath had been likewise affected.

"Go to your cabins and free yourselves from your uncomfortable armor and weapons," Captain Cartier said, turning to where De Pont Brian and Goliath stood talking. "Then come to my cabin, for I would have talk with you concerning these savages—and know if your cabins have been searched during your absence," he added in a lower voice.

It did not take De Pont Brian and me long to get to our cabin, for a great anxiety had come to us at the thought of the hours we had been gone, not only from our cabin but from the ship itself.

The door had not been tampered with. It was still locked, as we had left it. Not a thing in the room, so far as we could discover, had been disturbed. The scratch on my bunk-post was still in perfect alinement; the casket still inside its hollow.

"Glory be, no one has been here!" De Pont Brian exclaimed, when we had satisfied ourselves that our cabin had not been searched during our absence.

"It's Goliath's turn," I declared excitedly. "Come let us go to Captain Cartier. I am most anxious to learn if Goliath's or Captain Cartier's cabin has been searched."

Captain Cartier's cabin had not been searched. Goliath had not yet come. Howbeit, we did not have

long to wait, before we heard a low rumbling roar outside the cabin and the next moment the door was flung open and Goliath burst into the room, his eyes glowing with excitement.

"They searched my cabin!" he cried out the instant he was inside and the door closed behind him. "But I fooled them! They did not find the hiding-place of the jewels, at least they did not take them. But I found this!" and he held out triumphantly, on the palm of his hand, a small, flat, brass button, with the head of a girl rudely stamped on it, the eyes coming where the thread-holes were. "I found it near my bunk on the floor under one of my shoes. So it stands to reason that my cabin must have been searched, since I have no buttons like it myself, never saw one like it before. Besides, the shoes had been moved. I had placed them in front of my bunk in a certain way, purposely; and they were not as I placed them, when I returned. That's how I came to find the button. I picked up one of the shoes to examine it; and there under it lay the button. It is bright, which shows it was in use. It's a peculiar button, as you can see, with that girl's head on it. Now, if we can find the man wearing the mates to it, I'll wager that we will have the man who searched my cabin. By my great bow! and the three long braids of my black whiskers! I'll— Begging your pardon, Captain Cartier— I'll leave his punishment to you!"

"And it is well that you do," Captain Cartier answered grimly; and I knew by the set of his jaws that he would have no mercy on the man, if caught.

We now all examined the button with great interest and curiosity. Not one of us had ever seen another button like it.

" 'Tis Spanish make," said Captain Cartier, "and

common enow with sailors, save for the girl's head, with the two eyes of it used for thread-holes. I've seen many flat brass buttons, but never another one the like of that. Now keep your eyes open for a brass button with a girl's head stamped on it on one of the seamen. If you find one, report its find to me at once— But how did the man manage to do the searching, since I had given strict orders that not one of the men left on board was to leave the deck for an instant? It is a matter that needs looking into. Also, I will have stout bolts placed on the doors of all our cabins, so that none can come in and take the jewels or do us harm while we sleep."

Captain Cartier did look into the matter and that strictly; but the officer left in charge of the men during our absence, vowed that not one of the men had left the deck, while we were ashore, that he had kept his eyes on every one of them all the time; and, being a trustworthy man, Captain Cartier saw no reason to disbelieve him. So now we were obliged to add that mystery to the other mysteries.

Thus ended the matter of the third search of one of our cabins for the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the Aztec Jewels.

CHAPTER XX

THE SAVAGE KING VISITS US—AND IS GREATLY ASTOUNDED

THE same day, after we were back on board our ship, there came many savages, both men and women and their children, to have talk with the two wild men, see the marvels of the great ship and to discover in what manner we lived in it. Our captain received and entertained all in as friendly a manner as could possibly be; and, to further win their friendship and goodwill, he gave them many small gifts, of little value to him, but marvelously prized by the savages. It was most interesting to watch the looks of astonishment come and go on their faces and in their black eyes, albeit these people have remarkable control over the expressions on their faces, as they went from one part of the ship to another, seeing what to them were marvels at every step they took.

As for our two wild men, they were in a heyday of glory, as they showed their savage friends about the ship, explaining all things so far as they could, and, doubtless, making many boasts of the even greater things they had seen in France. (I wished I could have understood some of their tales, especially those told by Taignoagny, who was gifted with a wild imagination and had little regard for truth in his tales-telling.) Both still had on the cast-off fineries of the court nobles, which they had worn when we went ashore, and strutted about as proudly as any two peacocks that ever spread tails.

They even tried to imitate, in their walk and postures, the court nobles they had seen in Paris; and succeeded in a manner so unwittingly comical that De Pont Brian and I had great joy in watching them. Both of us wished more than once, as we followed them about the ship, that the court nobles themselves could have seen these ludicrous caricatures of their own fashion of dressing and acting. Mayhap, it would have shamed some sense into their foolish heads.

The next day, about ten o'clock in the morning, while De Pont Brian and I were attending to some small duties for Captain Cartier, which kept us below the deck, the sounds of great excitement on the deck above our heads came down to us and a moment later we heard the loud "ho-hoing" of many savages coming from over the water.

"What's happening?" I exclaimed, pausing in my work.

"I don't know," answered De Pont Brian, "but I'm going to find out," and he straightway dropped his work and started for the deck.

When we came on deck, for you may be sure that I was not far behind De Pont Brian, we saw that the landward side of the ship was crowded with sailors, all talking and yelling and pointing excitedly. Captain Cartier and a couple of his officers, with our two wild men near at hand, stood a little apart from the others, also looking shoreward.

"It's the savages coming to visit us!" yelled De Pont Brian. "Twelve boats full of them. Look at that lordly fellow in the first boat. He acts as if he thought himself somebody of importance, doesn't he? Mayhap he is that great king of this country, of whom Taignoagny and Domagaia have told us."

"At any rate, he is giving orders like a king," I replied. "See, he is sending ten of the boats back to the shore and approaching our ships with only two boats and sixteen men. Who is he?" and I turned to Taignoagny and pointed to the savage, for we had stopped at the railing near where the two wild men stood.

"He great chief, King of all Canada, Donnacona," answered Taignoagny. "He live in big village, Stadacona,[1] short way up Big River. Maybe we go visit soon."

"But, see!" I exclaimed, in great disappointment, "he is not coming to our ship. He is going to the *Hermerillon*! What does that mean?"

"Watch him. You see," grinned Taignoagny.

The two boats of the savages now stopped a little way from the *Hermerillon* and the big chief, Donnacona, arose slowly and with great dignity in the prow of his boat.

"Now, you see!" exclaimed Taignoagny. "He make big talk of welcome to small ship first. Then he come to us. This he do, as my people [2] do."

Now Donnacona began his "big talk," oration, I would call it, moving all parts of his body, arms, legs and head, as he spoke, in a most curious manner, which, Taignoagny told us, was a ceremony and sign among them, whereby they signified their gladness at our coming and promised us security.

When Donnacona had made an end to his "big talk,"

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[1] This Indian village occupied the present side of Quebec, which shows that even the savages appreciated the great beauty and advantages of this site for a city.—E. M.

[2] Taignoagny and Domagaia, although they were taken from Gaspé by Captain Cartier, the year before, on his First Voyage to America, were natives of the region of Quebec. They had come to Gaspé on a war expedition.—E. M.

he and his boats came to our ship; and, coming aboard, he first spoke with our two wild men, for he was anxious to find out from their own mouths what treatment they had had from us and what they had seen in the Land across the Great Water.

Then our two savages told him of the good entertainment they had had at our hands and related to him some of the marvels they had seen in France. On hearing these things he was greatly amazed and very glad and prayed our captain to reach him his arm, that he might kiss it.

This Captain Cartier did and the savage king kissed his arm and took and laid it about his neck, which, in this country, appears to be their way of doing, when they wish to show one great honor and respect.

After this ceremony was ended, our captain, with Taignoagny and Domagaia acting as interpreters, showed him about our ship and explained to him many things and more especially how the wind, taking hold of the great sails, pushed the ship over the water, without any help from our hands; and how the turning of the helm this way or that way caused the great ship to turn in like manner. But I am most certain, from the looks of awe and wonder on the chief's face, that he could not comprehend these things and accounted it all to the greatness of our magic, whereby we compelled unseen and powerful spirits to do us service. This I could see greatly increased his admiration and respect for us and especially for Captain Cartier, whom, doubtless, he thought of as something a little more than mortal, mayhap even as some sort of a lesser god.

Now our captain, wishing still further to win the good-will of this powerful Lord, went with him to his own boat and caused bread and wine to be brought and

asked Donnacona and his companions to eat and drink with him, which they did willingly, to their great content and satisfaction.

These things being done, they took leave one of the other in as friendly a manner as could possibly be and Donnacona and his men returned in their boats to their place of abode; and with him went Taignoagny and Domagaia, for these were their home-people and they had a great longing to visit with them.

As soon as the savages were gone, Captain Cartier caused our small boats to be set in order, so that, with the next tide, we might go higher up the river, to the great joy of De Pont Brian and me; for we were anxious to be moving all the time in this strange New World, where there were so many wonders to be seen, that we were fearful of missing some of them. We rowed up the river, against the stream, along the coast of that great island of which I have before written, until, at length, we came to the end of the island and the river widened out greatly. Here we found as goodly and as pleasant a sound for our ships to anchor in, as the heart of a captain could wish, and hither Captain Cartier determined to bring his ships. A little river comes running down from the mainland into this sound. Captain Cartier gave it the name of the Holy Cross [1] for on that day did we discover it.

Now De Pont Brian and I, as we sat in our boat, looking about us, thought the scene before our eyes one of marvelous beauty and grandeur. From the very edge of the river, going almost straight up, towered a mighty wall of rock, rugged and bare and grim as the wall of some gigantic ancient citadel. Along its base rushed the

[1] Now called the St. Charles River.—E. M.

surging current of the great river. Around it lay the forests and the valleys, the hills and the mountains and the great solitudes of an unknown wilderness, where the feet of civilized man had never trod. De Pont Brian, who has a great love of nature, was deeply moved by the lonely grandeur and beauty of the scene.

"What a place the top of that rock would be," he declared, "to build a mighty fortress, to found a great city. A queen she could sit enthroned on that great rock, and rule all this fertile and beautiful country around us. Of a certainty, Yuon, this must come with the going of time. God never made a scene like this to continue alway to grace, in lonely grandeur, an unknown wilderness, with naught but heathen savages and wild beasts to look on it. Mark these words I have said, Yuon, for I spake with the tongue of a prophet; and, having thus spoken, I step down to earth again, where I belong," and he grinned. "Nathless, I go not back on those words."

I have often thought that De Pont Brian hath much of the poet in him; for, when he looks on a beautiful scene like this, there sometimes comes a glory in his eyes and a splendor in his words, that stir my soul as poetry does. I like him best when this mood comes upon him and his words seem to sing in my ears— But, I must get me back to my tale.

Near this sound and river is the village of Stadacona, whereof Donnacona is Lord and wherein he lives. It lieth on as goodly a plot of ground as possibly may be seen, very fertile, with many fine trees growing on it, as I could see even from our boat. At first I thought that Captain Cartier had in mind to visit this village; but, to my disappointment, for I was most curious to see how these wild men lived, he did not go on that day. We rowed about the sound and up the little river for a short

distance, considering the virtues of the place as a safe harbor for our ships. Then Captain Cartier, finding all as if made to his purpose, turned about to return to the ships, which were in the little river. But, the moment we came out of this river, I, who sat near Captain Cartier in the prow of his boat, gave a great shout and, jumping to my feet, pointed with my hand.

"Look! Look!" I cried. "The savages come to meet us! Great numbers of them, men, women and children! What a wild looking folk they are! Never would I have believed such a strange-looking and — acting people lived, even in this New World, did I not see them with my own eyes— Ah, here comes the orator," and I turned and grinned at De Pont Brian, who liked not their long orations.

As I spoke, a boat shot out from among the others and came to a stop not far from our boat; and a tall savage, with a great ridge of hair, standing upon the top of his head, and decorated in a most curious fashion with feathers, arose in the prow of his boat and began to make a long oration, thrusting forth his arms, jumping with his legs and contorting his body and features in a most strange and curious manner. This appears to be the fashion among these people when they welcome strangers and wish to show gladness at their coming. To me it seems a very foolish custom; for who would care to hear a long oration every time they visit strangers, the more especially, if they cannot understand a word said, as we could not. The women, the greater number of whom walked in the water, for they were near the bank, where it was very shallow, came singing and dancing up to their knees in the water; and they continued to sing and dance while the chief was orating.

I do not think their women are at all beautiful, al-

though, some of them, when young have well-proportioned forms. Their faces are mostly ugly, with a dull stupid look on them, all save the eyes, which are jet black and sparkle with animation, as if there might be fires back of them.

When the chief had made an end of his speech, our captain, knowing that they came in good-will and kindness to visit us, caused those in boats to come near to him and gave them certain trifles, such as knives and glass beads, whereat all were marvelously well pleased. Even when they departed from us they went singing and rejoicing; and, when we had gone a half a league from them, we could still hear them singing and see them dancing on the shore, for all they were so far from us.

CHAPTER XXI

A LONG ARROW HITS A TREE

EVER since the anchoring of our ships in the little harbor betwixt that great island and the mainland, Captain Cartier had had in mind one day to explore the island. This he now decided to do, before taking the ships to their new anchorage in the wide basin lying at the foot of that great rock. Accordingly he had the boats made ready and early the next morning he, together with a number of his officers and the young noblemen and a suitable number of his men for defense against the savages, should there be need, rowed to the island and there landed.

Of course, De Pont Brian and I went with him; for, by now, he had made us his personal attendants and he seldom went anywhere without our accompanying him. Also Goliath, his big body-guard, who always attended him when there was a possibility of danger, was with us. Among the young noblemen I was considerably surprised to see Louis du Val, for that young gentleman of late had held himself somewhat aloof. Not for days had he attended any of the sword-exercises still held on our ship and not once during that time had he been aboard the ship. I was told that he had become unusually moody and irritable, even for him, more haughty and overbearing than ever and seemed to be so preoccupied with his own thoughts that he did not act as if he cared to talk with anyone. Twice, if it had not been for the intervention of Captain Cartier, he would have fought duels

with comrades whom he thought had offended him. To my surprise, he met me with a smile and his hand extended.

"I have had the megrims of late, De Valour," he said, as he reached forth his hand, his teeth showing whitely in a lip-curling smile. "For the past month a gnawing pain has set its teeth in my stomach; but now it gives me ease and I feel like myself again. During that time I was fit company for no one, being irritable and I fear me quarrelsome; and, knowing this, I kept to myself as far as possible. Now I live again! De Valour, you will soon see me at your sword-play, when I shall even venture to try my skill against the famous De Valour Sword, sobeit you will forget my past sullenness and ill-nature and grant me that privilege," and again came that lip-curling smile.

"Willingly, Du Val," I made answer, wonderingly, but glad to meet him half-way.

" 'Tis a bargain, then. Now I must get me to my men," he replied and we separated, he having been given a small command by Captain Cartier for this day's exploring only.

The moment Du Val was gone I looked wonderingly at De Pont Brian, who stood near and had heard our talk, and he looked wonderingly at me; for both of us had been much mystified by this sudden change in that arrogant and truculent gentleman.

"What make you of it, Claude?" I asked.

"I know not," he responded and he looked his puzzlement. " 'Twas not done like Du Val and I doubt if the change goes deeper than the skin. Also, I misdoubt that 'gnawing pain' in the stomach, on which he blamed his misbehavior. I liked not the smirk in his eyes, when he spoke of it. Howbeit, we can but take for granted its

truth, until his actions show otherwise. But, if I mistake not, he has his own reason for this unusual friendliness toward you. If I were you, Yuon, I would be watchful to discover what that reason is."

"I think you are right, Claude. I will be watchful too——"

But here Captain Cartier began shouting his commands to his officers and men and we were forced to break off our talking together.

We found the island full of goodly trees, like to those in France, with many fine grape vines hanging from them, a thing we had not before seen in any of the countries of the New World whereon we had landed. In truth we saw such great quantities of grapes growing wherever we went on this island that Captain Cartier gave it the name of Bacchus Island.[1]

This country looked to me very much like one of the pleasantly wooded parts of France; and, had it not been for a certain wildness about it and the feel of a great solitude, which seemed to lie underneath its tall trees, I could easily have thought myself roaming through one of our great forests at home. We saw few wild men in the interior of the island; for the savages come hither for the most part to fish and have their dwelling-places near the water. Nor did we see any large wild animals, like to bears, deer or even wolves; but there was a great abundance of birds of all kinds, both song and game birds and birds of prey, like to eagles, hawks of many kinds and sizes, and owls, some of them very large. Captain Cartier thought that the dearth of the larger wild animals was caused by the swiftness and power of the current of water that went down betwixt the island

[1] Now called the Isle of Orleans, lying in the St. Lawrence River a little below Quebec.—E. M.

and the mainland on either side, the larger animals not daring to venture into the swift current and swim to the island. There were also great numbers of rabbits and smaller beasts and Goliath had great sport with his bow. Again and again I saw him bring down a fat bird on the wing or send a running rabbit tumbling to his death. Always his skill with that great clumsy-looking bow of his was a marvel to me. Captain Cartier would permit none of us to shoot off our guns, so that only those carrying bows brought back any game with them.

About midday we came upon half a dozen of the bark huts of the wild men; but, at our approach, the savages all fled in great terror and hid themselves in the woods. Doubtless, living by themselves in the interior of the island, they had not even heard of our coming. I went into one of their huts. It was curiously made out of wide strips of bark, torn from the trunks of birch trees and fastened to poles thrust into the ground and bound together in such manner as to form the framework of a rude hut. The house was vilely kept and smelled so strongly of its vileness that we (De Pont Brian was with me) did not abide in it long. Several chunks of meat were roasting over a fire built near the center of the space inside the hut. The sharp-pointed ends of sticks had been thrust through the meat and their other ends stuck into the ground, in such manner that they held the meat at a proper distance from the fire. Dirty skins of wild animals lay on the ground, doubtless their beds. Dog-gnawed bones and other refuse was scattered about over the earth-floor.

"The saints preserve my nose!" exclaimed De Pont Brian, almost the moment we entered. "I am going out," and out he went, holding tightly to the end of his nose. And out I went with him, likewise holding to my nose.

We paused here but a few minutes and then resumed our explorations.

Not five minutes after we left the huts of the savages, as I was passing under a great oak tree, my foot caught in one of its projecting roots and I was thrown violently forward. At that instant something whizzed by my head and I heard a thud, like to that of a knife suddenly thrust into wood. Greatly startled, I straightened up quickly and turned to the trunk of the tree, from which direction the sound of the thud had seemed to come—and saw a long feather-tipped arrow sticking straight out from the great trunk! I shivered at the sight of it and at the thought of what that arrow might have meant, had I not stumbled; for, evidently, it had passed exactly through the space where my head would otherwise have been.

In a moment Captain Cartier, De Pont Brian, Goliath and others were standing by my side, staring at the arrow. Goliath reached forth a great hand and plucked it, but with much difficulty, from the tree.

" 'Twas strongly shot," he said, looking wonderingly at the arrow.

Captain Cartier instantly ordered his men to search the woods whence the arrow had come. They sprang away on the run and De Pont Brian and I leaped with them.

"That was a narrow escape, Yuon," De Pont Brian said, as we ran side by side. "The blessed saints, of a certainty, had an eye on you at that moment. But, it puzzles me. Why should these savages, who have hitherto been so friendly, seek to kill you?"

"Not me, Claude, but one of us," I replied.

"There were many nearer to the spot whence that arrow came, than you, Yuon, yet it sought you out." He

stopped running suddenly. "Yuon, art sure that was the arrow of a savage? I thought it had a strange look about it. Come with me. I must back and have another look at it," and he started back on the run, I running with him.

We found Captain Cartier and Goliath standing a little apart from the others. Goliath still had the arrow in his hand and was examining it minutely. The moment they caught sight of us running toward them, both cried out and wanted to know what had happened, if we had caught the one who had shot the arrow?

"No, nor likely to in these dense woods," De Pont Brian answered. "I don't believe these friendly savages shot that arrow. Is it one of their arrows? Let me see it," and he reached forth a hand for the arrow and took it.

I saw Captain Cartier look quickly at Goliath and Goliath look quickly at him, as De Pont Brian spoke these words.

"Why do you think a savage did not shoot that arrow?" Captain Cartier asked.

"Because all these savages have hitherto been so friendly; because they think us white folk almost gods and would not dare to attempt to kill one of us; besides what harm has Yuon done them? Why would they want to kill him? That arrow, Captain Cartier, was meant for him and none other——"

"And Goliath here says that the savages have no bows powerful enow to send the stone-head of an arrow into the trunk of an oak tree as deeply as that arrowhead was sent. He vows that only a French longbow could do it and then only when a powerful hand and arm pulled back the bowstring. But, he says, 'tis like one of the arrows of the savages. Aye, Goliath?"

"'Tis somewhat long, but——"

"Look here!" suddenly broke in De Pont Brian excitedly. "Who ever heard of the stone arrow-head of a savage being bound to its shaft with the waxed thread of a French shoemaker? Look!" and he held up the arrow in one hand, where all could see it, while with his knife in the other hand he cut the cord that bound the stone-head tightly into the split made for it in the end of the shaft.

"Wh—what's that? The waxed thread of a French shoemaker!" and Goliath quickly caught the arrow out of De Pont Brian's hand and began examining the cut thread.

"The lad is right! It is the waxed twist of a shoemaker!" and a look of astoundment came on his face. "No savage ever fastened that stone arrow-head into its place. They use the sinews of deer or other animals for this purpose. Look, Captain, it is colored to appear like sinew, but its shoemaker's twist sure enow," and he handed the arrow to Captain Cartier.

Captain Cartier examined the long arrow carefully, unwinding the thread which held the arrow-head in its place, measuring the length of the shaft with his eye and noting closely how the feathers were attached to the shaft. Then his face hardened.

"Of a surety this be not the arrow of a savage. Even the feathers are fastened to the shaft with waxed shoemaker's twist. The split in the shaft for the arrow-head has been recently made. The shaft is a good six inches longer than any I have seen in savage hands. Yet it has been most carefully fashioned after the manner of the savages and the shoemaker's thread, colored so as to look like sinew, evidently with the intent to deceive us; and, had it not been for the sharp eyes of De Pont

Brian, it would have passed unquestioned for the arrow of a savage, albeit somewhat long."

"But—but, what do you make out of it?" I here interjected, greatly puzzled and excited, not yet seeing their point. "Why should the savages want to kill me? I never did them any harm."

"I fear me, Yuon," Captain Cartier's face was now a very stern and sober face, "that that arrow came from no savage hand, th——"

"But, who else could have shot it? There be only Frenchmen and savages here! Surely——"

I stopped abruptly and stared at Captain Cartier. He stared back at me, his eyes hardening as he stared. Then we both turned and stared into the eyes of De Pont Brian and Goliath, who stared back into ours. The same thought had come to all of us. De Pont Brian was the first to express it.

"The Evil Three!" he exclaimed and looked quickly around him, as if there might be danger hiding behind each tree. "They want Yuon dead! 'Tis he to whom the jewels belong."

"Aye, the Evil Three," declared Captain Cartier. "That arrow must have come from one of them. There be none other who could have bent that evil bow. I——"

At that moment Du Val came running up to where we stood, panting with the haste of his coming.

"My men have captured the savage who shot the arrow," he panted. "They come hither with him straightway. One of them even saw him jump from yonder clump of bushes, whence the arrow came, and all gave chase. He is most speedy, that savage, but they captured him and now they bring him to you, Captain Cartier. See, here they come."

As he spoke a number of men appeared coming out of

the thick brush and woods, which surrounded the little opening in which we stood, leading a tall, slim, young savage by a rope tied around his neck. His hands were also tightly bound together behind his back and his feet hobbled so that he could take only short steps. Evidently they did not intend that he should escape.

"Here be the very savage who shot that arrow at young De Valour, Captain Cartier," said the man who held the rope, when he and his captive stood in front of our captain. "I saw him leap up from yonder clump of thick bushes," he pointed in the direction of the brush, whence the arrow appeared to have come, "when we started to search the woods. My eyes never once left him until my hands had hold of his slippery hide, so that I be sure that I have the right savage. See, here is the very bow from which he shot the arrow and the quiver whence it came," and he held out a bow and a partly filled quiver of arrows to Captain Cartier, who took them, giving the man a sharp look as he did so.

Also De Pont Brian and Goliath and I were eying the man sharply, and likewise the bow and the quiver of arrows, not knowing what to make of this sudden and unexpected turn the affair had taken.

He was a short, thick-set man, with great shoulders for his height, a bull-like neck, long, strong arms and legs and a coarse brutal-looking face.

I knew him at the first glance, knew him for a lawless drunken fellow, often at odds with the law in St. Malo. In truth, the first time I had seen that brutal face, it was looking out at me from the pillory in the public square at St. Malo, where I often saw it afterwards, grinning and scowling at me derisively. He was well known in St. Malo by the name of Louys Douayren.

"Let me have a look at that bow and arrows," Goliath

said, speaking even before Captain Cartier had spoken, who handed him the bow and arrows without a word.

I noted that Goliath's eyes went first to the heads of the arrows and then to the feathers on their shafts, a quick searching look to each. He fitted an arrow to the bowstring and, turning quickly, drew it to the head and sent it whistling into the trunk of that same oak tree, which, but a short time before, had received that other arrow. Then he strode to the tree and plucked the arrow from the trunk and I saw that he had little difficulty in doing so.

Up to the present moment Goliath had not spoken a word since the bow and arrows were placed in his hands, going through his actions as silently as he would have done had there not been another human being near. Not one of us had spoken a word. Du Val, I could see, was watching Goliath's every movement, his eyes half closed and a wondering questioning look on his face, as if he were trying to interpret what his actions meant. Louys Douayren stared at Goliath somewhat blankly, his mouth falling a little open, and I thought I saw a look like that of fear come into his eyes. Once Du Val's and his eyes met. It was but a glance and, mayhap, I was mistaken; but it seemed to me that there was a look in Du Val's eyes that said, "Be careful."

"This, of a certainty, is the bow and the arrows of a savage," Goliath said, as he returned to where we stood, and handed the bow and arrows back to Captain Cartier. "That other——"

"And what thought you it might be, the harquebus of a Frenchman?" interrupted Captain Cartier abruptly, with a warning glance at Goliath. At the same time he threw open his coat a little and in such a manner that only the eyes of Goliath and my eyes could see that

other arrow snuggly hidden beneath it, then, with a sly wink of the eye turned toward us, he quickly closed the the coat again.

"Douayren, I thank you," and he turned to the man who held the captured savage by the rope tied around his neck. "I commend your vigilance and promptness. Now as to this savage," and he turned to the young wildman, who fixed his black eyes on his face, "I am puzzled as to what to do with him. Doubtless he is guilty of shooting that arrow, but no one actually saw him do it. Douayren here saw him jump up from the bushes, whence the arrow appeared to have come, and run; but that only proves he was in the bushes from which we think the arrow came, not that he shot it. No——"

"Your pardon, Captain Cartier," here interrupted Du Val, an uneasy look in his eyes, "but—but" he hesitated and shot a swift glance first at Captain Cartier's face, then at Goliath's, "but he must have shot that arrow. We found no other savage anywhere in the bushes. If you do not punish him, other savages will think that they can take pot-shots at us any time they like and go unpunished. I——"

"That will do, Du Val," broke in Captain Cartier sharply. "When I require your advice, I will ask for it. It is plain," he continued, turning to his men, who by now had gathered around us, "that we have no actual proof that this savage shot that arrow, not even that the arrow was shot at De Valour, nor any one of us. All we actually know is that an arrow shot by someone, from somewhere, came near hitting De Valour. The arrow might have been aimed at something else, at some animal or bird. No harm was done De Valour. No hurt given any one of us. To kill or punish otherwise this savage, without stronger proof, would be unjust and

might make enemies of all these savages, who are now our good friends. What say you, De Valour, who are the most concerned? Shall we let the young savage go free?"

"Yes," I answered promptly and gladly; for I had great admiration for that young savage, who faced his strange captors so undauntedly. Besides, I did not believe he had shot the arrow; and I knew that, "yes," was the answer Captain Cartier expected me to give. "Even, if guilty, it might be the making of a friend out of an enemy to let him go. Set him free, Captain Cartier."

A cheer went up from the men around us at my words. Captain Cartier took quick advantage of this favorable moment.

"Untie that rope from his neck. He is no dog. Free his arms and legs and let him go unharmed where he will. Know you all," and his eyes swept over the faces of his men, "that I grant these savages the same justice that is granted to us, not guilty, until proven guilty." Another cheer from his men greeted these words. "Now, summon all, who have not yet returned from searching the woods. We will return at once to the ships. De Pont Brian, De Valour, Goliath, attend me and you, also Du Val. I would show you some appreciation of your promptness and vigilance, after my rough words."

I wondered somewhat at these words of Captain Cartier to Du Val, for he had never before showed any liking for the company of that surly young gentleman; but Du Val really had been alert and skilful in the capture of the young savage and, doubtless, Captain Cartier wished to show him his appreciation of that service, as he always did when good work was done by one of his men. Be that as it may, I could see that Du Val was

much pleased with this attention of Captain Cartier and was more pleasant and jovial on our way back to the ships than I had ever known him to be before.

As for the young savage, he paused but a moment after having been freed from his bonds; and, then sped swiftly away and vanished, as if by magic, into the surrounding woods. Captain Cartier had Du Val rowed to his ship, the *Hermerillon*, where he bade us all good-by in the most friendly manner.

"Remember that promise," he called down to me, as he climbed up the side of the ship, "you are to give me trial of the famous De Valour Sword at our next sword-exercise; and do not too quickly send my blade spinning from my hand," and, with a light laugh, he disappeared over the side of the ship.

"We must meet," Captain Cartier said in a low voice to De Pont Brian, Goliath and me, the moment we came on deck our own ship. "Come to my cabin quietly at eleven o'clock to-night, when all is still on board and you can come unseen. This matter is getting serious, now that Death hath taken a hand in it. In the meantime act and speak as if you thought that that young savage had shot the arrow. See if your cabins have been searched during your absence."

We separated without further talk.

When De Pont Brian and I entered our cabin, our first thought was of the jewels; but a glance at our safeguards told us that the room had not been disturbed. Everything inside the cabin was exactly as we had left it.

As soon as we had made certain of this, our tongues broke loose on the strange happenings which had befallen us on the Isle of Bacchus, on the mystery of the shot arrow. Howbeit, despite all our talk, we could come to no definite conclusions; and our heads were in

as great a muddle as ever, when it came time for us to go to the cabin of Captain Cartier.

We went cautiously, keeping to the dark shadows, I going first and after me, at a little distance, De Pont Brian, watchful to see if anyone followed me; but we both came to the cabin door without our seeing sign of anyone on guard against our coming. We found Goliath already with Captain Cartier.

"Was your cabin searched?" were the words with which Captain Cartier greeted us, as we entered; and he nodded his head at our answer.

"Neither was the cabin of Goliath, nor was mine," he continued after the nodding. "I did not expect that they would be; for, evidently, the searchers were with us. Goliath, you know more about bows and arrows than any other man on board our ships. What make you of this arrow shot at De Valour?" and he laid the arrow, which had come so near killing me, down on the table in front of him. "Speak frankly."

"That I will," answered the big bowman, as he picked up the arrow from the table and held it in his hand. "First, the arrow itself was not made by a savage. Second, this arrow was not shot from the bow of the young savage captured by Du Val and his men. I stake my reputation as a bowman on that. Third, I have seen many of the bows used by these savages; but I have seen none with the strength in them to drive this arrow into that oak tree as deeply as I found this. Only one of our French longbows could do that, a French longbow in the hands of, let us say, a man like Louys Douayren, who is both strong and a skilled bowman. He——"

"Body of God! I believe you are right, Goliath!" broke in Captain Cartier. "'Twas Douayren himself who shot that arrow. He was somewhat celebrated in

St. Malo for his skill with the longbow and likewise for his stubborn lawlessness. 'Twas only to save St. Malo the expense of his keep in jail that I took him on board, that and being somewhat short of men. 'Twas an act that fits his evil reputation, like a sword its scabbard and a thought that would explain much—how he was the only one who saw the young savage jump up from the bushes, the shoemaker's waxed twist on the arrow,—Douayren is a shoemaker by trade—the power of the arm that sent the arrow-head so deeply into the oak tree, 'twould explain them all. Of a certainty I will look into this matter. But as yet we have no actual proof that it was his arm that bent the bow that shot that evil arrow. If I had, he would hang from my highest yard-arm to-morrow morning. But 'tis vain to ponder the matter longer now. Besides it is late and we all need sleep for to-morrow's work. Now, not a word of our suspicions to any other."

And with this he blew out the light, opened the door and himself stepped out first to see if there was aught suspicious about before our going.

"I see naught," he whispered, "nathless go cautiously and silently," and, like shadows, we glided through the darkness to our cabins.

CHAPTER XXII

THE GOD OF THE MUSTACHE

WHEN we went on deck the next morning, we found Captain Cartier already there. We chanced to find him standing with Goliath a little apart from the others; and, the moment our greetings were over, he said, none others being near to overhear him: "I have had Douayren transferred from the *Hermerillon* to our own ship, where we can keep watchful eyes on him, yet we must be careful that he knows not of our watching. He fancies this was done because of his diligence in capturing the young savage and is much pleased in consequence. See, yonder he stands, near the main mast, with a little knot of sailors already around him, to whom he is, doubtless, telling the tale of that mysterious arrow and the shrewd manner in which he captured the savage who shot it. Be on your guard against him and watchful that he sees no suspicious acts on your part. Never speak of that arrow but as if you felt most certain it was shot by that young savage, unless it be where no ears but ours can hear it. Later, we will set traps for him; and, if we can but catch him searching one of our cabins, God have mercy on his wicked soul! I'll not." His eyes and face hardened; for our captain was greatly enraged by these mysterious searchings.

At this moment there came the sound of the shot of a harquebus from the deck of the *Little Herminia*, followed almost instantly by one from the *Hermerillon*.

"That is the signal to tell me that all is ready to up

with the anchors and set sail for our new harborage," Captain Cartier cried out joyfully, as his face lighted and his right hand shot up above his head.

As his hand went up, a man standing at the forward part of the deck fired off his harquebus, as an answering signal to the two other ships; Captain Cartier began shouting out his commands; the heave-ho-hoing song of the sailors at the anchor-windlass came to my ears; the great white sails climbed up the masts and spread out their wings; and, with a glad heart, I saw that our ships were off again.

We sailed along the coast of the great Isle of Bacchus until we came to its ending; and thence to the entrance of that small river, which our captain had named the Holy Cross, and there we anchored our ships, with that great rock towering frowningly above us, as if to forbid our farther advance, and the wild and lonely grandeur of the mighty wilderness all around us.

Hardly had we let fall our anchors and lowered our sails, when a great shouting went up from all three of our ships; for we saw that Lord Donnacona, together with Taignoagny and Domagaia and twenty-five boats full of savages, was coming to greet us, all showing by sundry and divers gestures of gladness and mirth and loud ho-hoings of welcome, their great joy at our coming. Our captain at once invited Lord Donnacona, Taignoagny, Domagaia and many of the savages who were with them to come on board our ship. Lord Donnacona and a number of his savages did so in a most gladsome manner, uttering many cries of excitement and astoundment as they clambered up the side of the ship and on to the deck; but, to our amazement, Taignoagny and Domagaia held back and would not come on board, albeit our captain earnestly urged them to do so. May-

hap, being now home and with their own people, they wished to abide with them and were fearful, should they come on board, that Captain Cartier would hold them there. Our captain called to them and asked, if they would go up the river to Hochelago, a great village of these savages. They answered that they would go; and then, without more words, both withdrew themselves and we saw no more of them that day, which we thought most strange, seeing that both of them had been on such friendly terms with all of us.

This action of the two savages sorely troubled Captain Cartier; for, without them, he had no one to act as an interpreter betwixt him and the wild men. In truth, he had taken them with him back to France on his former voyage mainly to teach them our language, so that when he came again to America he could talk with the savages through them. Now, he was fearful that, having again tasted the wild freedom of the savage manner of living, they would come to him no more, might even try to stir up trouble betwixt him and their people. Howbeit, there were no signs of anger nor of mistrust in the actions of Lord Donnacona and the savages with him.

De Pont Brian and I watched them moving about the ship with great interest. They were like little children in a room full of wonders, save that the savages did not give expression to their astoundment and surprise in as lively a manner as little folk do.

Again Goliath, albeit now without his shining corselet, attracted the most of their attention. Even Lord Donnacona looked on his huge form and great black beard, with its three outstanding braids of stiff whiskers, with awe.

" 'Tis your beard, Goliath," declared De Pont Brian

grinning. "They worship you for that great bunch of long black whiskers. Doubtless, not being able to raise as many hairs on all their faces combined, as you have done on your one face, they think you must be a god to accomplish so great a marvel, the God of the Whiskers!" and his grin widened. "In very truth, Goliath, it is a marvel how all that hair came to grow out of one face. I would know how you——"

As De Pont Brian spoke thus, he had been gradually drawing nearer and nearer to Goliath, doubtless bent on some mischief, whereby he might show these savages how little he stood in awe of this great God of the Whiskers. But 'tis hard to catch Goliath napping. He must have mistrusted something of this kind; for, suddenly, at the moment indicated by the dash, his great hand and arm shot out, caught De Pont Brian by the arm, jerked him to him, swung his left arm swiftly around his body and held him motionless, while, with a finger and thumb of his right hand, he very gently curled and twisted the few hairs below the nose of De Pont Brian, which the youth dignified by calling "my mustache."

"Look, Great Lord and Mighty Warriors!" besought Goliath, pausing in his tender caressing of the mustache long enow to beckon Lord Donnacona and his warriors to come closer. "Behold the evidence of his godship sprouting up thus gloriously below his nose, like the pinfeathers on the skin of a young chicken. See, they be real hairs and not a base and deceiving counterfeit," and he gave each side of the mustache a quick and vigorous jerk. "They come forth from his very skin and will not pull out. Make trial, Mighty Lord and Brave Warriors. Five glistening beads will I give for every hair you pluck forth," and he thrust De Pont Brian in front of

him, still holding him with his mighty arm so that he could scarce wink an eyelash, and, pointing with a big finger to his mustache, he went through the motions of plucking out its hairs with his thumb and finger and then again beckoned to the chief and his warriors to approach and do likewise.

"Now," and he grinned widely down into the red and indignant face of De Pont Brian, "will you joke about my 'bunch' of whiskers? They be such as the good God sent me and not to be mended; and, if I choose to let them grow unshorn and braided into three stiff pig-tails 'tis to hide an ugly face and to keep the hair from getting into my mouth with my food and from blowing in front of my eyes, when the wind comes stiffly; and not to give you a subject whereon to exercise your bright wit. At least they be better than that bunch of pin-feathers under your nose. Now," and the grin once more spread widely over his face, "wilt call it quits, with no more joking about my 'bunch' of whiskers, nor your 'pin-feathers'? Or shall I allow this savage lord and his brave warriors to make pincers of their thumbs and fingers and see how many of the few hairs beneath your nose they can pluck forth. I'll warrant that the glory of your mustache will be gone when they quit the sport. Speak quickly or the plucking begins," and the great arm about De Pont Brian tightened.

Now I had had great enjoyment out of this scene; out of the discomfiture of De Pont Brian, who had thought to pit his wit against the wit of Goliath; out of watching the faces of Lord Donnacona and his savages, who, at first, had looked at this scene with great wonderment and not a little fear; but who now were pressing forward to the plucking, with Lord Donnacona in the lead, the thumb and finger of his outstretched right

hand opening and closing swiftly, like the nibs of a pair of pincers, and a look of absorbing interest and awe on his face. Doubtless, he thought, if he could but pluck a few hairs from that young god's mustache, he would have a talisman more potent than any ever held before by savage chieftain and would keep them ever afterward, as a treasure beyond all price, in his holy of holies. At least that is the way I interpreted the look on his face and in his eyes, as he advanced toward Goliath and De Pont Brian, stepping as if he trod on eggs, with the fear of sudden death on him should he break one of them, his arm stretched to its full length and his brown finger and thumb working swiftly like the nibs of a pair of pincers.

At sight of the slow approach of the savage lord, De Pont Brian's face lost all its indignation and I saw that mischievous twinkling come into his eyes that portended some roguery.

"For the love of the saints, let him have one pluck, Goliath!" he begged, "and all will be forgiven betwixt you and me."

"That I will and right gladly," chuckled Goliath.

By this time Lord Donnacona was almost within plucking distance. He advanced another step, bent forward and, with sudden swiftness, his finger and thumb shot forth. Howbeit, doubtless, because of his awe and fear and excitement, he caught betwixt them, not two or three hairs, but the whole of one side of De Pont Brian's mustache and gave it a most violent jerk.

Never did I hear a louder nor a more pain-stricken yell than that which now came from betwixt the widespread lips of De Pont Brian; and he thrust up his knees so suddenly and so violently that both of them hit the lordly savage in the pit of his stomach ere he

could spring back; and, doubling him up like a half-closed pocket-knife, hurled him on his back to the deck, with so great a grunt of his out-rushing breath, that it sounded like the sudden bursting of a great over-strained bellows.

For a moment the savage chief lay gasping on the deck, staring out of wide-opened, awe-stricken eyes at De Pont Brian. Then, when he had sufficient breath back inside of him, he came up slowly on his feet, his two hands pressed tightly over his belly, and began backing away, his staring awe-stricken eyes still fixed on the face of De Pont Brian.

Truly, I think that he did not know what really had happened to him; but thought it was the wrath of the God of the Mustache that had struck him!

As for the other savages, at that fearful outcry of De Pont Brian, they surged back from him with so great a suddenness and violence that some of them were tumbled over the deck-railing into the water below and did not come on board again.

Captain Cartier, while he laughed heartily hurried to Lord Donnacona and assured him that neither offense nor harm had been intended; but, rather, that a great honor had been done him by the young God of the Mustache, who greeted thus only those whom he especially delighted to honor.

Lord Donnacona looked as if he swallowed this explanation whole. At any rate his mouth was wide open and he backed away from De Pont Brian with a look of great awe in his eyes and with no appearance of anger nor offense whatsoever. Shortly after this incident, he and his savages got into their boats and returned to the shore.

When the savages had gone, Captain Cartier rebuked

De Pont Brian and Goliath severely for this action, which savored somewhat of disrespect and discourtesy to the savage chieftain; and forbade all joking with the savages, however humble their stations, when the joking showed disrespect or humiliated or gave pain.

"But Lord Donnacona did not look offended, only more awe-stricken," protested De Pont Brian.

"And, mayhap, more belly-stricken," chuckled Goliath.

"In that awe of his we were most fortunate," declared Captain Cartier. "But these be a proud and masterful race of savages, who, in their own minds, yield in greatness and glory to no other race of mankind; and to us only because they now think we are somewhat more than mortal. But, doubtless, it will not take them long to discover that we be but mortals, like themselves, and that knives and arrows and axes can kill us. Then will they no longer stand in awe of us; if they have injuries we have done them, or humiliations we have caused their pride, to remember, it might go ill with us. Wherefore, mark you, we will have no more joking of this kind; for, however funny it might have seemed to you, I am most certain Lord Donnacona saw no fun in it; and, had it not been for the great awe in which he stood of us, this small joke might have had most serious results."

CHAPTER XXIII

A STRANGE PRESENT—THUNDER GODS

EARLY the next morning, Captain Cartier, taking a sufficient number of his men to do the work and to act as guards, went on shore, where he wished to drive certain poles and piles into the water in such manner as to give our ships greater safety, when anchored there. Hardly had we begun this work, when many savages came crowding down to the shore from the nearby village of Stadacona, very curious to see what we were doing.

" 'Tis strange, but I see neither Lord Donnacona nor our two savages among them." Captain Cartier's eyes searched anxiously the crowding savages. "I hope that that ill-mannered trick yesterday did not anger nor offend Lord Donnacona. It would be most dreadful, if he and his savages should now turn against us! As for Taignoagny and Domagaia! 'Tis most needful that we keep on friendly terms with them. Look! Both of you, look!" and he turned to De Pont Brian and me, who stood near him on the shore. "Mayhap your younger eyes can find them in this turmoil of ever-moving savages. I must——"

"There! There!" I suddenly broke in excitedly, pointing to where a rivulet, coming down swiftly from the high ground, formed a somewhat secluded point of land on its shore near where it entered the great river. "Is not that tall savage yonder, standing a little apart, as if he would not be seen, Lord Donnacona? And, of

a certainty, those two savages near him are Taignoagny and Domagaia! But, why do they stand thus sullenly apart and come not nigh us?"

"I know not," answered Captain Cartier; "but I am going to find out and quickly. Come you with me and you also, Goliath. I would learn what this sullenness means," and commanding part of his armed men to follow, for safety's sake, our captain hurried with us to that small point of land, where we found Lord Donnacona and Taignoagny and Domagaia, with many other savages gathered around them, sullenly regarding our coming.

"Mon Dieu! Of a certainty, something be wrong here! They look as sulky as tired donkeys!" breathed Captain Cartier and I could see that he was sore troubled. Nathless their greetings were friendly enow.

"Why came you not to meet us, as brothers should? What means this clouded brow? Is my brother angry?" and Captain Cartier fixed his eyes searchingly on the face of Lord Donnacona.

Then Taignoagny, stepping forth a little from the others, took it upon himself to answer: declaring that Lord Donnacona was sorely grieved that our captain did not have a more trustful manner toward them; but that he and his men always came into their presence wearing their warlike weapons, as if fearful they might be set upon and have to fight. Whereas, they came to him all unweaponed, confiding in his friendliness.

Then our captain answered boldly that, albeit it did grieve them, yet would he not go unweaponed, neither he nor his men; that it was the custom of Frenchmen thus always to go armed and meant no distrustfulness of him nor of his people.

Lord Donnacona, much to my surprise, for I feared

these bold words of Captain Cartier might anger the powerful chief, seemed well pleased with them and all his sullenness and unfriendliness quickly vanished. But I noted, and was greatly amused thereat, that he would not go nearer than three long paces to De Pont Brian and that his eyes were continually going to his face in search of that marvelous mustache, with looks of awe and wonderment in them very amusing to behold.

When we returned to where our men were at work, Lord Donnacona and our two savages accompanied us, walking and talking with us in the most friendly manner, as if there were no unfriendliness left in them. Our captain, who was always quick to see and make use of the turning of a situation in his favor, at once took advantage of this friendliness on the part of the savage lord to enter into a marvelously strong and steadfast league of friendship with him. The forming of this league of friendship appeared greatly to please the savages; for, when Lord Donnacona announced the making of it, all of them as if with one great voice, did open wide their mouths and cast out three mighty yells. I thought them the most horrible sounds that ever went into my ears, so hoarse and guttural and savage did they seem, albeit I knew that they were meant to express their gladness at the forming of this league. There was too much of the sound of a beast in them.

Shortly after this, having completed our work, we took leave of our savage allies and went back to our ships.

Now, as we sat in our boat on our way back to our ship, I could see that many thoughts were troubling Captain Cartier. Frowns and lines came and went on his face and betwixt his eyes, as they will when a man studies deeply some troublesome problem. Presently

he glanced about the boat and seeing no one in it but the rough sailors at the oars and ourselves, De Pont Brian, Goliath and myself, he turned to us.

"Body of God!" he exclaimed. "But I was glad to find that the trouble with Lord Donnacona was no worse and so quickly mended. When he did not come to meet us and held himself aloof in such a stubborn manner, I was fearful he meant serious trouble; and that might cause the abandonment of our further explorations and, mayhap, our utter destruction; for he has more warriors than all of us together have fingers and toes; and we be alone in an unknown wilderness, where no help can reach us. But the saints, of a certainty, were with us this day and out of this trouble has come, I trust, a lasting league of friendship.

"Howbeit, one other matter of this day's happenings still troubles me. What make you of the actions of Taignoagny and Domagaia, especially of Taignoagny? I would that I understood their language, so that I could check up on his translations; for I be fearful that, knowing neither Lord Donnacona nor I understand each other's language, he is translating our words, as it seems best to him; that he speaks three words of his own mind to every one of ours. I like not this wanting us to come to them unweaponed. Without our weapons they could overwhelm and destroy us at their will. Furthermore, I do not believe that he spoke with the voice of Lord Donnacona, when he said this; but with his own. Of a certainty our two wild men need watching! What think you?"

Now that the matter was presented to us after this fashion by our captain, we agreed that the two savages had given us cause of suspicion lately, especially Taignoagny during our talk with Lord Donnacona and that

we should be watchful of them and no longer give them our full trust.

Thus was added yet another trouble and danger to those which already beset us; but we had faith that Captain Cartier would ultimately triumph over all of them and bring us safely and gloriously back to France.

"The greater our peril, the greater our honor and glory, if we but overcome them," said De Pont Brian, that fine light coming into his eyes. " 'Tis a glorious adventure and I joy in every moment of it. Aye, Yuon?"

"Aye, Claude," I answered, thrilling to his words, "in very truth, it is a most glorious adventure! I would not forego it, if I knew it would bring me death, with glory and honor, to-morrow!"

It was late when we came to our ship and, being well tired with our work and the excitements of the day, De Pont Brian and I went at once to our cabin. Also, we were anxious to discover whether or no the Evil Three had been at work again during our absence; but, so far as we could discover, not a thing had been disturbed and the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the Aztec Jewels were safe in their hiding-places.

" 'Twould seem that our friends have been frightened off for the time being, or discouraged by their ill-luck," declared De Pont Brian. "Mayhap the shooting of that arrow and our actions thereafter, put the fear of discovery into their hearts and now they would lull our suspicions. At least not a suspicious happening has occurred since then."

"They have no need of hurry," I replied. " 'Twill be a long time yet ere we set sail for France," and, with no more words, we tumbled into our bunks and were soon sleeping the sleep of tired youth.

With the coming of the morning, Captain Cartier had

our two great ships brought to the harbor he had prepared for them within the mouth of the river; but our smallest ship, the *Hermerillon*, he left without, to the end that he might go in it to Hochelaga; for he had been told by the savages that he could in no wise sail the larger ships thither, on account of the many rapids and jagged rocks, where the water ran with great swiftness and little depth.

We had no more than well anchored these ships in their places, than we heard a great shouting and singing and saw Lord Donnacona, Taignoagny and Domagaia, with more than five hundred savages, men, women and children, coming out from the woods, which here grew thickly a little way back from the river. They came down to the river bank, dancing, running, shouting and singing as they came, after their manner of showing gladness and welcome. A number of the young maidens ran down into the water toward us, so far as the depth of the water permitted, still dancing and singing in a most joyous fashion. I thought some of these maidens looked most comely, as they thus danced and sang up to their knees in the water. All had well-rounded and beautiful forms; but, when they came closer, a certain savage coarseness looked out of their eyes and faces, which repelled me.

Captain Cartier received them most courteously and had Lord Donnacona, Taignoagny and Domagaia, together with a dozen or more of the chiefest men among them, come on board, where he gave them friendly entertainment and divers small gifts, of beads, pieces of brightly colored cloth, mirrors and such like things of little value, but which gave great content to these savages, who had never before seen their like.

Now it was that Taignoagny again took upon him-

self to speak to our captain, as if with the tongue of Lord Donnacona. He said that his Lord did greatly sorrow, when he learned that his white brother purposed to leave them shortly and go further on up the great river, even to Hochelaga. He declared that many dangers from rocks, swift running water, great beasts and other evil things would certainly beset us all the way; that, on account of these many dangers his Lord would not permit any of them to go with him; and, finally, that there was no good reason for his facing all these perils, since the river above was of no importance and that even the village of Hochelaga itself was not worth the facing of so many and so great perils, being but a small and dirty village, with no great lord, like Lord Donnacona, ruling over it; and that his Lord begged them to remain here where they could dwell in great comfort and content, so long as it pleased them to stay.

Now I saw, by the look that came into his eyes and the firm way he drew his lips together, that Captain Cartier did not like these words of Taignoagny. In truth, they seemed even to me to show a somewhat too great anxiety to keep us with him, as if our going would disrupt some plan of his own; and again came the troublesome suspicion that he was not saying the words Lord Donnacona had given him to say; but, rather, such words as seemed best to him. Howbeit, Captain Cartier listened patiently enow until he came to the end of his talk. Then he answered him after this manner:

"Taignoagny, say unto the Lord Donnacona that I and my people came across the Great Water to explore and make known this unknown country, at the bidding of our King, who is the most powerful and most

wise ruler in all the world; that he commanded us to continue our explorations as far as we could possibly go, permitting no dangers and no hardships to halt us; and that, wherefore, I and my men, despite your words of warning, will not leave off going to Hochelaga."

Thus, having spoken, our captain began to urge Taignoagny to go with him, as he had afore agreed to do, promising him that he would not only be well entertained, but that, in addition, so great a gift would be given to him that it would gladden his heart ever afterward.

To this Taignoagny answered, I thought somewhat shortly, that he would by no means go with him, no matter how great the gifts he offered; and then, turning abruptly away, he and Lord Donnacona and the savages who came with them, suddenly left our ship and returned with all the others to their village, as if the words of Captain Cartier had offended them.

"Well, let them go," smiled Captain Cartier. "Doubtless, they'll be back to-morrow, for these savages have all the pettinesses of little children and what they think to-day is no sign of what they will do to-morrow."

In truth, on the very next day, Lord Donnacona and his company did return and brought with them many eels, as well as sundry other sorts of fish, as if they had already forgotten the ill-will of the day before.

When they had come to the shore fronting on our ships, they began to dance and sing in the most gladsome manner, as it is their custom to do, when making people welcome.

Now followed a ceremony which I had never before witnessed. First, Lord Donnacona caused all his people to be set on one side. This done, he made a great circle with the point of a stick upon the sand and, calling on

all of us to come ashore, he placed us all within the circle, with Captain Cartier and our chiefest men, over against the savages.

Then Lord Donnacona stepped out in front of Captain Cartier, holding by one hand a maiden child of some ten or twelve years, and began a long oration, making, as was the custom of their orators when they spoke, many curious and outlandish gestures and motions with his arms, legs and body and many hideous grimaces with his mouth and face.

"Of a certainty, Yuon, I think he must have placed us within this circle, to keep us from running away, when he began his oration," laughed De Pont Brian; "for, never before, did I behold such frightful and terrible gestures and grimaces as he is making. Wonder what it means?"

"Mayhap, it means that he has the bellyache," I grinned. "See, how the flesh in the midst of him twists and turns!"

We both watched him with great interest and curiosity until, suddenly, he stopped speaking, held up one hand high above his head, palm outward, took three long steps toward Captain Cartier, still holding the maiden child by the hand, paused and then caused the child to fall prostrate on her face at the feet of Captain Cartier, thus signifying that he gave the little girl to him.

At the instant he did this, all the savages opened their mouths as wide as could possibly be and sent forth three great shrieks or howls, in hideousness like to the sounds made by some monstrous beast when in great agony, which, strange as it may seem, is their way of manifesting their approval of words said or of acts done.

I could but feel pity for that small girl, as Captain Cartier lifted her up on her feet and bade her have no

fear; for I saw the uncomprehending wonder and fright in the black eyes she lifted up to his face, nathless she did not cry nor make other sounds of complaint, which caused me wonder.

When this ceremony was ended, Lord Donnacona summoned two boys to him, both younger than the girl, and presented them also to Captain Cartier. At their giving all the savages again opened wide their mouths and sent out three very loud and hideous shrieks of approval.

When the horrible sounds of these yells had died away, Captain Cartier, standing with the three children in front of him, gave Lord Donnacona great and very hearty thanks for his gifts. Then, turning to Goliath, he bade him take charge of the children.

" 'Twill be the first brood of young chicks I was ever called upon to mother," he said and frowned, then came that heavy rumbling growl of a laugh from him; "but I have often felt that I knew better than do most mothers how to mother young children and now be the time to put this matter to the test. First," and he eyed the three sharply, "since they be savages and, therefore, heathens, and all as dirty as three wallowing pigs, I will begin the good work by baptizing them with good soap and water, in the great tank, wherein the sailors do bathe, when the dirt on their bodies becomes too thick for comfort; and will wash away their dirt and with it, doubtless, some of their sins. Come you hither, my pretty ones," and the big bowman called the wondering and frightened, but whimperless, little savages to come to him in a most friendly manner; and they, recognizing his friendliness, came willingly.

Now it was that Taignoagny stepped forward and once again spoke to our captain. He told him that one of

the boys given him was his own brother and that the little girl was none other than the daughter of Lord Donnacona's own sister; and, then, stepping yet closer and speaking lower, he said that the three children had been given to him to the end that he might be prevailed upon not to go to Hochelaga at all.

At this I saw a flicker of anger come into the eyes of Captain Cartier and he made quick answer that, if the children were given to him with any such intent, then might Lord Donnacona have them quickly back again; for he would not give over his going to Hochelaga, not for this nor for any other reason whatsoever, since he knew that his King would hold him blameworthy did he not go.

Then, to my great surprise, for hitherto he had left all the talking to Taignoagny, who had a quicker moving tongue, Domagaia stepped up to Captain Cartier and told him, despite certain motions of Taignoagny to stop him, that Lord Donnacona had given him the children only as a sign and token of the good-will of himself and of all his people and as a security that he and his people would hold themselves true to their league of friendship with him; and not to prevail upon him to give over his going to Hochelaga, as Taignoagny said.

At these words Taignoagny became very angry and the two of them began a great talk to each other, in their own language in a most violent and threatening manner and were like to come to blows, when Goliath suddenly reached forth his two great hands and, catching them by the napes of the neck, began shaking them so violently that I thought to see their teeth drop out of their mouths.

"Stop it!" he growled in that great voice of his, "or I shake the bones out of your skins, as a man shakes

sticks of wood out of a cloth bag. Such outlandish, hog-like gibberish makes my ears ache." Then, with a broad grin on his good-natured face, he cast the two savages from him; and I noted that Taignoagny went sprawling to the ground with much more violence than did Domagaia, whereat I was greatly pleased.

The angry gruntings stopped abruptly and a great terror came into the wide-open eyes of the two wild men, as they quickly came up on their feet and, as quickly, retreated out of reach of Goliath's big hands.

Then we all perceived plainly that Taignoagny was a crafty knave. Howbeit, now that we were warned against him, we did not think that he could do us any great hurt and, since we had need of him in our talks with the savages, we passed the matter over, as if we had not understood the words of Domagaia.

Now, when quiet had been thus restored, our captain caused two swords and two copper basins to be brought to him. These he gave to Lord Donnacona, in appreciation of his gift of the three children, which gave so great content and joy to the savage chief that he commanded all his people to dance and sing before us.

In the midst of this dancing and singing and general rejoicing, Lord Donnacona came to Captain Cartier and, by motions and otherwise, signified that he wished him to shoot off a piece of artillery; for Taignoagny and Domagaia had made so great brags and had told him such marvelous things, as to what these great guns could do, that he was desirous of knowing whether or no they spoke true words. Wherefore, he wished our captain shoot off one of the guns, so that he and his people could hear and see the marvel themselves.

Captain Cartier smiled at this request and, glancing shrewdly at the great number of savages assembled be-

fore him, he turned to Lord Donnacona and told him that he would do as he wished; and he smiled again as he spoke.

"And not one of these savages, save our two wild men, ever heard or saw a great gun fired!" grinned De Pont Brian. "Look out, Yuon, for some wild excitement, when our great guns go off; for, if I interpret aright that smile of our captain, he is going to give them, not only a volley from our own great guns, but also a salvo from both the ships anchored near us here in the river, that will make the wild men think that the heavens themselves have crashed down on the earth. Look, he is sending Goliath, with the three savage children, to take his commands to the officers on board the two ships. Doubtless, Goliath will lock the children in his cabin and then see that the proper number of guns are fired to do honor to Lord Donnacona and his people —trust Goliath for that! Look, you, at that delighted grin on his face, as he turns to go to the ships! Aye, Yuon, something tells me that we are both in for some pleasurable excitement!"

"You are right, De Pont Brian," chuckled Captain Cartier, as he turned to us, at the departure of Goliath; "for it is my purpose to put the fear of our Thunder Gods into the hearts of these savages and thus make their dread and awe of us greater, to counteract any evil planning of that two-faced knave, Taignoagny, should there be need. Not one of them, methinks, will dare to lift a hand against us, after what they presently see and hear," and again came that chuckling laugh.

Lord Donnacona now stood with his black eyes fixed on the ships, in an attitude of intense expectancy. But, apparently, not one of the other savages had a thought of what was about to happen. They were still dancing,

singing and shouting like happy children. Not far from where the savages danced and sang and a little distance back of them, a great finger of the woods came down almost to the bank of the river. As I looked at the savages, I could see this finger, thick with trees, back of them. Suddenly I saw branches of its trees go flying madly through the air, saw the trunks themselves splinter and crash to the ground and heard an eery, screaming whistling, as if from invisible fiends flying through the air—and the next instant there came a great, crashing thunderous BANG! For a moment I thought that awful noise would deafen me. Never before had I heard so great and terrible a sound, not even when all the big guns in the fort at St. Malo were fired at the same instant. Mayhap, it was because the face of that great rock, near which we had anchored our ships, threw the sound back again into our ears and thus redoubled its effect; mayhap it was because the silence of that great surrounding wilderness emphasized the sounds of the guns. At any rate, it was a most tremendous and glorious BANG!

As for the savages! An instant they stood with mouths wide open, staring in utter amaze at the great clouds of black smoke rolling upward from the sides of the ships, at the red arms of flames darting out from the midst of the smoke; and then they whirled about and fled, wild with terror, howling, crying, shrieking, tumbling one over the other, toward that great finger of the woods, seeking shelter there and not yet seeing the destruction being wrought among the trees by the cannon balls. When they saw these stout trees falling in splinters before their very eyes, without the hand of man touching them, they were like to have died of fright, fell prostrate on their faces to the ground and lay there

motionless, howling and praying to all their gods and devils to protect them. I saw even the dignified Lord Donnacona, at the vast roar of the cannon and the sight of the smoke, filled with shooting flames, jump a good four feet straight up into the air and then, flinging the great robe of bearskins from around him, flee so swiftly that the flaps of his breech-clout stood out straight behind him, like tails.

Ah, but that was a sight to delight the heart of youth! Even Captain Cartier stood, with both hands pressed tightly against his sides and great guffaws of laughter bursting from his wide-opened mouth, as he watched the terror-stricken savages.

Then, almost as suddenly as the great noise had come, the silence of the great wilderness came again. I do not think that a single savage moved an inch for a full five minutes. Then I saw a few of them stir, saw Lord Donnacona, who had fallen prostrate with the others, lift up his head and stare, with mouth agape and wide-opened eyes about him; and then, slowly, as if still doubtful whether or not he was really alive and unharmed, rise to his feet and look, first to the ships, now resting quietly on the bosom of the river, as if naught had happened to disturb their serenity. Then he turned his astounded eyes to Captain Cartier and his men; and seeing the ships and men all unharmed and the men grinning broadly at him, he uttered so great a shout of gladness that it brought every savage up on his feet.

When all the savages stood on their feet, it was ludicrous to see the looks of astoundment and wonder, followed by foolish grins, that came on their faces, when they caught sight of us grinning at them. Then they went running to the woods, where the cannon balls had caused great destruction among the trees, and looked in awe

and wonderment at the splintered trunks and fallen limbs; but not one of them would enter their midst, until we assured them, by word and acts, that all danger was over now that the Thunder Gods were silent.

Then I knew that all had happened just as Captain Cartier had shrewdly planned. He was not slow to take advantage of this good fortune and, while the terror was still fresh in their minds, he set about making the savages understand that all this destruction amongst the trees had been caused, at his command, by the Thunder Gods he kept on board his ship; and that, if he had so commanded, he could as easily have destroyed any enemy who came against him. But, since Lord Donnacona and his people had made a league of friendship with him and his people, he would not suffer the Thunder Gods to harm one of them, so long as they remained true and steadfast to that league.

This firing of the great guns had been a master stroke, for it had filled Lord Donnacona and his savages with so great fear of him, that, I verily believe, if there had been a thousand warriors standing there, as he stood alone, all of them together would not have dared, at that moment, to have lifted their weapons against him, no matter how great the provocation.

"That, I think, cooks Taignoagny's goose and renders it harmless," chuckled Captain Cartier, when all this had come to an end. "Now we will come on board and begin to make ready to continue on our way up the river to Hochelaga, despite the protests of the savages."

But, not yet had these cunning savages done their utmost in their efforts to stop our going to Hochelaga.

CHAPTER XXIV

THREE QUEER DEVILS APPEAR—AND FORBID OUR GOING TO HOCHELAGA

THE next day, while De Pont Brian and I, with Captain Cartier, Goliath and others were at work on the deck of the *Hermerillon*, making the ship ready to start early the next morning for Hochelaga, we saw a great excitement was brewing among the savages, near where that finger of wood came down to the water; and wondered what might be the cause of it; but we were too busy to give the matter much attention. An hour or more passed; then, suddenly, a sailor working near us, uttered a yell of astoundment.

"What be that coming down the river?" he gasped and pointed to the stream, with his mouth all agape. "Be they devils, come out of this heathen land?"

At that yell I jumped to my feet and now stood staring wonderingly in the direction of his pointing hand. A boat was slowly coming down the river toward us. I blinked and rubbed my eyes when I caught sight of what was in that boat. Never before had I seen the like. My first thought was that three of the terrible demons, which, you will remember, we were told dwelt in certain parts of this New World, were coming down the river to get us. Then I heard the laugh of Captain Cartier and the chuckling of Goliath.

"Body of God, what are these wild men up to now! Is it a wilderness play they are about to give, with these three devils for their leading characters?" and

again Captain Cartier laughed and Goliath chuckled.

The boat by now had come near and I could see that the three terrible figures in it were naught but savages, dressed to look, at least so they fancied, like to three devils. They had white and black dog skins wrapped about them, their faces were besmeared with something that looked like tar, so black did it make them, and around each of their eyes was a white circle, about half an inch wide. From the top of their heads two great horns, fully a yard long, thrust themselves forth. Truly, now that they were near, they made a most ludicrous, albeit very hideous, appearance and I laughed, as I thought of my alarming fear of them at my first sight of them.

At this moment a great number of the savages came rushing out of the woods and down to the shore, with Lord Donnacona and Taignoagny running at their head, all showing great wonderment and fear at the sight of the three devils and not coming as near to our ships as they were wont to do.

On came the three devils in the boat, paddling slowly. Now the middlemost devil, who had the longest horns, stood up in the boat and began to orate as they moved along the side of our ship; but not one of them, not even the orator, turned his eyes in our direction, as they went by. They stared steadfastly straight ahead and kept thrusting with their long horns in a most threatening manner, mayhap, to tell us what dreadful devils they were.

When the three devils had gone about one hundred yards from us, they turned their boat toward the shore. At the same time a sudden tumult broke out on the land.

"See!" I cried excitedly, "Lord Donnacona and all

his people have started for the three devils, as if they would catch and kill them! What can it mean?"

"You must ask them, not me," laughed back Captain Cartier. "No white man can comprehend what lies hidden in the head of one of these savages. But, I mistrust, there is something more back of the coming of the three devils than has yet appeared. Mayhap, 'tis a ruse to frighten us from going to Hochelaga—Ah, look! They have captured the devils! Now we shall see what they will do with them!"

As Captain Cartier spoke, I saw Lord Donnacona and his people rush suddenly upon the three devils, now having come to where the water was shallow, and surround the boat; but, before any could lay a hand on the devils, all three fell prostrate on the bottom of the boat and lay there as if already dead. Then the savages instantly seized upon them, with a great clamor of glad shouting, and dragged them out of the boat and into the woods, which here lay but a stone's cast from them, still shouting with gladness and triumph. All the savages went with them into the woods out of our sight.

"Quick, Captain Cartier, let us go and see what they do to those three devils!" I cried, for I had a great desire to know what happened in the concealment of the woods.

De Pont Brian at once seconded me; but Captain Cartier would have none of it.

"It is best," he said, "that we should wait for the savages to come to us, as I am sure they will do presently and not show unseemingly anxiety and curiosity by going to them. Besides we are pressed for time—Hark! They orate!" and he grinned. "They can do nothing without making a speech about it."

After a moment's listening, we returned to our work

and gave no more heed to that loud voice. At the end of about half an hour, the voice suddenly ceased. I stood up quickly and looked in the direction of the woods, curious to see what would happen next. For, mayhap, two minutes I did not hear a sound, nor see a sign of the savages. Then I saw Taignoagny and Domagaia come from out the woods and walk toward us. Both were dressed in all the grandeur of their motley cast-off court costumes, which I have afore described, and walked with hands held upward and clasped together in front of them, and carried their hats under their upper garments. I know not why. When they came near I could see a look of terror and amazement on their faces, as if they had just received some awful revelation from the three devils. When they had come yet closer, Taignoagny lifted his eyes to heaven and cried out, "Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!" Three times he repeated the name. Then Domagaia also lifted his eyes to heaven and called out, "Jesus Maria! Jacques Cartier!" Three times did he also call out these names.

Whereon our captain, seeing that they appeared to be in sore trouble, called to them and asked what it was that ailed them and what had chanced anew that they should come thus to him, showing terror and amazement.

Then Taignoagny answered him that very ill tidings had befallen; that their god, Cudruaigny, had spoken in Hochelaga; that he had sent those three devils to warn him not to go to Hochelaga and that, if he still persisted in going despite the warning, their god, Cudruaigny, would send tempests of snow and drifting ice and freezing cold against them and all would surely die.

At this, we all laughed loudly, mocking their god; and Captain Cartier called back to them that their

god was but a fool, a blunderhead, and knew not what he said or did or he would have sent no such a message to us. Then he bade them carry back this answer to their god, that Christ would defend us, so long as we put our trust in him, from all tempests of snow and drifting ice and freezing cold; and that he and the men selected to go with him would surely set sail for Hochelaga early the next morning, despite all they could say or do.

At this Taignoagny asked him if he had spoken with Jesus.

"No," our captain answered, "but our priest had. He told us that we would have fair weather and would come safely to Hochelaga."

When our captain had spoken thus boldly, the two wild men, the fear and amaze all gone from their faces, thanked him somewhat to my surprise, and straightway departed for the woods to tell the news to their fellow savages.

"And they truly thought that they could frighten us and stop our going to Hochelaga by the coming of those three long-horned, imitation devils!" laughed De Pont Brian, as soon as the two savages were out of hearing. "Look!" I cried a few moments later, "the savages are all coming out of the woods and running down to the river bank toward us, singing and shouting as they come, as if Taignoagny and Domagaia had told them good news. I wonder what this means?"

"Ask the savages, not me," grinned Captain Cartier.

No sooner had the wild men come to the river where it fronted on our ships, than they gave three great shrieks, very dreadful to hear, as is their wont when greatly pleased, and began to dance and sing, as if they had just been told something that gave them unbounded joy.

The cause of this sudden joy of the savages mystified us greatly; but, since they never told us the wherefore, it is a mystery still.

Presently Taignoagny and Domagaia came as close to the ship as they possibly could, without stepping into the water, where they could easily talk with our captain. Then they told him that Lord Donnacona would by no means suffer any of them to go with him to Hochelaga, unless he left some of his men with them as a pledge that his savages would be returned to him.

I saw that this questioning of his good faith somewhat angered Captain Cartier and he answered them shortly, that, if they would not go with him in all goodwill, they need not go at all; that he would most certainly go to Hochelaga, whether they went with him or not. Then he pointed out to them that he was really leaving two great ships and a company of many men in their territory.

These words of our captain appeared to content the savages and they departed from us in as friendly a manner as could be. In a short time we could not see a savage where hundreds had been but a few moments before.

It was dark when we returned to our ship that night, after having made all things ready on the *Hermerillon* to sail in the morning.

When we came on deck, I saw Captain Cartier hold back a little, until De Pont Brian, Goliath and I had come abreast of him.

"Have you yet decided what had best be done with the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the Aztec jewels, when we go on board the *Hermerillon* in the morning?" he asked in a low voice, after a glance about the deck to see if any others were near enow to overhear his words.

"I do not think it would be wise to leave them here, with no one to guard them during our absence."

"No. We have given the matter much thought; but have come to no definite conclusions, save only that it would be folly to leave them here in their present hiding-places unguarded," was the substance of our answers.

"Then, if that much is agreed on, I will leave Louys Douayren here, so that no arrow of his will trouble us. But, no more now. Come quietly to my cabin at twelve o'clock to-night and we will settle the matter there, as, in truth, we need must, since we sail early in the morning. Give all your thoughts to it until we meet," and he and Goliath hurried away.

Now, as we hurried to our cabin, it came suddenly to both of us that the Evil Three would wish to make, if possible, a last desperate search for the jewels, before our going to Hochelaga, since they must feel quite certain that we would take the jewels with us, rather than leave them here unguarded in the ship. This appeared to us the more certain because, for all they yet knew, all three of them might be left behind. Then, if anything untoward happened to us or to the jewels, and so many things might happen on such a venturesome journey, the jewels would be lost forever, not only to them, but to everybody else. Aye, under such circumstances, they certainly would want to secure the treasure before our going! And we, unthinkingly, had given them just the opportunity they needed in which to do the searching, by spending the greater part of the day on board the *Hermerillon*!

Such thoughts put haste to our feet, so that by the time we came to our cabin we were running.

"Look! Look! They have been here!" I cried out,

the instant we flung the door open. "The Evil Three have been here!" and then I leaped to my bunk-post and began frantically unscrewing its top, a great dread in my heart, for I had left the bunk neatly made up, with a heavy blanket folded and laid across the foot. The blanket was now carefully spread over its entire top. Evidently, the searcher had forgotten how he had found it and, replacing it, he had made a bad error.

In my excitement I had not examined the post to see if the two scratched lines fitted one to the other, before I had begun turning the top. Now, it seemed to me that the turning had started easier than usual. My heart jumped at the thought of what this might mean.

At this moment the top of the post came off in my hands. But now the dread that I would not find the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the Emerald Pyramid inside the hollow kept me from looking within.

"Look! Look quickly and see if the casket is there!" cried De Pont Brian, as I hesitated; for by now he was as excited as I was and stood near me, staring at the post, instead of learning whether or not his own hidden treasure was safe.

And then I looked!

"'Tis here! Thank the blessed saints, 'tis here!" I cried out the next instant, my breath coming in panting excitement; and then I thrust my hand down into the hollow and pulled out the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and stood staring down at it, a most wondrous feeling of gladness sweeping through me.

"Open it! Don't stand there staring down at it like a ninny! Open it quickly and see if the Emerald Pyramid is within!" De Pont Brian exclaimed impatiently.

My hands trembled as I pressed a finger down on the golden sun emblazoned on its top. The lid flew open and

there beneath my eyes lay, in all its glorious splendor, the Pyramid of Quetzalcoatl, with the equally marvelous and bejeweled god still squatting on its top!

" 'Tis certain that they have not discovered my hiding-place!" I cried out jubilantly; "for, if they had, of a certainty they would have taken this glorious casket and the Emerald Pyramid. Never could they have left so marvelous a jewel behind them! But, Claude, what of the jewels intrusted to you? Are they still safe?" and my eyes turned anxiously to that short board in the wall of our cabin behind which De Pont Brian had hidden the jewels given into his care.

In a moment more he had looked. They were safe and showed not a sign of having been disturbed.

We were jubilant; for we now felt certain that the Evil Three had not yet discovered our hiding-places for the jewels.

"Now," De Pont Brian said, as soon as we had quieted down, "what shall we do with the jewels, when we go to Hochelaga? I can't see how we——"

"I have it!" I interrupted excitedly. "I know how I'll manage with mine. Listen! Goliath, since the weather has turned somewhat cold, wears a great, loose, blouse-like upper garment. He is so big that he can safely conceal the casket, with the Emerald Pyramid inside of it, under its broad bosom and none be the wiser for it. Then I'll make me many small pockets and sew them on my soft deerskin belt and place the jewels Goliath now has in his keeping in them and strap the belt around me under my clothes. Then, how can anyone tell that I have the jewels with me! I——"

"The very thing!" broke in De Pont Brian. "I'll do likewise. I have the very belt for it. Come, let us sew the pockets on our belts now, before we go to the cabin of

Captain Cartier, and take them with us, so that we can show them to him."

Accordingly, we at once secured our belts and soon had a sufficient number of pockets of a suitable size sewed on them to contain the jewels.

By the time this was done it was nearing midnight. De Pont Brian placed the jewels he was caring for in the pockets of his belt; and, with that important problem thus solved, we put out the lights and went out softly, I with my belt and the Casket of Quetzalcoatl hidden under my coat.

Captain Cartier's cabin had also been searched, during our absence on the *Hermerillon.*

"God grant me but a sight of the sneaking thieving villains!" he exclaimed, as we entered. " 'Tis the cowardly secrecy of their work that most enrages me! How can anyone fight against that which is unknown and unseen? Now, if I could but know who the Evil Three were, I'd soon make end of them. I—" But here the door open and Goliath softly entered.

"I heard the sound of a boat in the water, when I stepped out of my door to come hither," he said; "and I crept cautiously to the deck-railing to see what might be happening. That is what delayed me. A boat, which, evidently, had just left the side of our ship, was moving cautiously over the dark water toward the *Little Herminia.* I could see it but dimly in the darkness, but I think it had two men in it. I neither saw nor heard anyone moving on deck. Now, what do you make out of that, Captain Cartier?"

"How can I make anything out of it?" answered our captain impatiently. "As usual it reveals nothing clearly, only a shadowy boat, with shadowy men in it, moving in the darkness over shadowy water. 'Tis this shadowy,

sneaking part of the game that enrages me. If I could but lay hands on something definite, I'd— But what's the use? What of your cabin, Goliath? Was it searched? Ours were."

"Yes," growled the big bowman wrathfully. "I found that two of my bows had changed places and that my largest mirror had a crack in it that was not there when I went out. On examining it I could see that the glass had been taken out of its frame, doubtless to discover if any of the jewels were hidden within it, and had been broken—and it was the only mirror I have large enow to take in my whole face at one time, hair, beard and all! Now it gives a most outlandish twist to my nose every time I look into it! May a foul murrain rot their dirty hides! Ah, if I could but lay hands on the sneaking varlet who did it, I'd twist his nose for him! And I shall, someday, I can feel it in my bones!" and the wrathful growl deepened.

"God willing, we shall yet lay hands on the Evil Three," declared Captain Cartier. "But now enow of them. How think you we can best safeguard the casket and the jewels, when we take them with us to Hochelaga? The matter troubles me somewhat."

Then I made bold to explain my plan to him and we both showed him our belts.

"You've hit it, Yuon! We'll do exactly that," and his face lit up. "Unless you can think of a better plan, Goliath?"

"No, by the thick bones of my head, I cannot! But I have the very bag of good stout buckskin, in which to hang the casket around my neck, under my great blouse. 'Twill be as safe there as the life-blood in my heart. I will go and get the bag and the jewels and we will make the exchange now. 'Tis a grand idea!" and he hurried out.

In a moment he was back again with the bag and the jewels.

"I want another look at the Emerald Pyramid before I part with it," I said, as I laid the casket down on the table and pressed the golden sun on its top. The lid flew open and again the great Emerald Pyramid lay before me in all its wondrous glory. I marveled, we all marveled, at its size and the strange-looking characters inlaid in gold on its sides. But, most of all, we marveled at that heathen god sitting cross-legged on its top; at its quaintly carved ebony features; at the wondrous gold miter, with tiny gold plumes glowing as if afire, on its head; at the gold collar around its neck and the pendant jewels hanging from its ears; at the jeweled scepter held in one hand and the curiously painted shield grasped in the other—and all this in a little more than an inch of height! And yet so skilfully and delicately was it wrought that it appeared perfect to the eye in its most minute details!

"What a jewel! What a jewel!" breathed Captain Cartier, as his eyes reverently devoured the glories of the Emerald Pyramid. "I do not believe there is its like in all the world! Guard it as you would your life, Goliath."

"As I will the very life-blood in my heart!" answered the big bowman. "I swear it by all that I hold holy and dear!" and he lifted his head and made the sign of the cross on his bosom.

"Take it then," I said. "May the blessed saints help you guard it!" and I lifted the wondrous jewel from the table, placed it back in the casket and closed the lid.

Goliath now opened the bosom of his great blouse and, lifting up the casket, placed it within the stout buckskin bag and hung the bag by two stout buckskin thongs

from his neck and over his bosom. Then he closed the blouse; and not even a bulge showed on his great chest.

All this was done without the utterance of a word by any one of us. Somehow the sight of that wondrous Emerald Pyramid, with that heathen god squatted on its top, had awed us all. I know that I felt somewhat as I did when one day I entered the great cathedral at Paris; and I think the others felt the same way.

It was now overlate and we must be up early in the morning, so we had no more talk, but went to our cabins, the awe of the great heathen jewel still in our hearts, I carrying the jewels Goliath had returned in the pockets of my belt, hidden under my coat.

CHAPTER XXV

DESPITE THE DEVILS, WE GO TO HOCHELAGA

EARLY the next morning, all on board the *Hermerillon* was ready for the start to Hochelaga and Captain Cartier gave the order to up with the anchor and the sails. As the great sails went up the masts and we felt the first movement of the ship under our feet, all on board and in the two large open boats, which were to go with us, burst into three great cheers, from the very gladness in our hearts that now we were about to adventure farther up the great river, that, at last, we were on our way to the big village of the savages, Hochelaga, of which we had heard so much. Our cheers were answered by the men who were to remain behind to guard and care for the two larger ships, which we had left in that small river. Thus, shouting and cheering and calling one to the other, our ship and the two boats got slowly under way and began moving up the river and into that unknown country, lying beyond the Great Rock, where no white man had ever been.

Not a savage had been on the shore to witness our departure; for our captain, not wishing to be troubled with their presence, had purposely kept them from knowing that we were to make so early a start in the morning. Doubtless, they did not awake, until they heard our loud shouting and cheering. But now, as we sailed past the Great Rock, they came, yelling and shouting, out to the very edge of the great cliff, until

the rock was black with them, and the noise they made, coming from a distance, sounded like the roar of a great waterfall.

Now, doubtless, you would know something of the men who were to go with us to Hochelaga. First, there were the young noblemen. This, of course, included Louis du Val. In addition, we took with us some fifty officers and men, which was all our small ship and the two open boats would accommodate. We carried a number of small cannon on board the ship and had harquebuses for most of the men. The rest had bows and arrows, which were still preferred to the more awkward and unwieldy harquebuses by some men, albeit they were now fast going out of fashion as a weapon of warfare.

Thus armed and prepared, but now with only the one small ship and the two open boats and with a greatly lessened force of men, we resumed our explorations up the great river.

De Pont Brian and I spent nearly all of that first day on deck, watching the shore glide by us. It was as goodly a country as could possibly be seen anywhere. Sometimes great forests, thick with mighty and tall trees, came down to the very edge of the water. At other times most delightsome little hills and valleys appeared, covered with great carpets of verdure, with many red, white, blue, purple and yellow flowers interwoven in their midst and all looking entrancingly beautiful and peaceful, with herds of deer and a larger oxlike animal, the name of which I know not, grazing on their rich grasses. All along both shores grew many vines, as full of grapes as they could possibly hang and seeming as if they had been planted by the hands of man, rather than by good mother nature.

But of all that we saw, we were most interested in

the bark houses and their inhabitants, scattered at irregular intervals along the shore. These were fisher folk and they caught their fish with hooks, made from the bones of fish and small animals.

None of these savages had ever seen so large a ship as ours, nor even a white-skinned man before; and all, when they first caught sight of us, showed the greatest surprise and astoundment. But, when we came near, and they saw that we were formed like themselves and that it was but the exceeding strange fashion in which we were dressed and the whiteness of our skins and the great length of our beards that had made us seem so strange and terrible at a distance. When they saw this, they, unlike the other savages we had met, appeared to lose all fear and awe of us and came out to us in their boats in as familiar and friendly a manner, as if, in very truth, we had been their neighbors all their lives.

But our captain, because the season was getting late and he feared the coming of the cold and the ice of winter, would not suffer any of these savages to delay us long and we were soon on the way up the river again.

That night we came to a place, which the savages called Hochelai,[1] where the river becomes very narrow and runs with great swiftness and has in it many great stones, all of which make it a fearful danger to men and boats. Our captain decided to pass the night here; for he did not dare to attempt these dangers during the darkness of night.

A great number of the savages of this region had come running down to the shore and, as soon as they saw that our ship and boats had come to a rest on the water, they jumped in to their own boats and came out

[1] According to Champlain this place was about fifteen leagues from Quebec.—E. M.

unto us in great numbers, vastly astounded and curious, but showing little awe or fear of us. Among them came the chief lords of that country. One of whom, as seems to be the custom of all these savages when greeting strangers, at once stood up in his boat and began to make a long speech, to the evident disgust of De Pont Brian. Presently I began to see that he was endeavoring to show us, with many signs and gestures, that the higher we went up the river, the more dangerous it became and that we should take heed of ourselves and go no farther.

But Captain Cartier would not let such a matter as this deter him. He was determined to press on to Hochelaga, no matter what perils threatened, so long as he could keep ship or boats afloat. I never saw a more persistent man. No threatening danger, no hardships, not even the seemingly impossible, could halt or turn him aside from the object he had set before him, so long as there was a possibility of his going forward.

At the ending of his speech, the savage Lord took two of his own small children, a boy and a girl, by their hands and, after causing them to prostrate themselves before Captain Cartier, he presented and gave both of them to him.

Our captain, with many and kindly thanks, accepted the girl, who was some seven or eight years old; but the boy, who was only two or three years of age, he returned to his father as too young.

"Here is yet another member for your happy family, Goliath," Captain Cartier said, as, with a broad grin, he turned and delivered the little, black-eyed maid into the keeping of the big bowman. "Be sure and put her in the tank with the others, when you give them their promised cleaning; for, methinks, the little wench ap-

pears not to have had a good washing since the day she was born."

"Then, by my Black Beard, she shall have the washing of her life! And the three others also, so soon as I can find the time and the water and the soap. By my big bones, 'twill be a dirty job!" and he glared down at the little black-eyed maid in simulated horror. "Now, I warn you, Captain, I mother no more heathen children. Already I grow old and haggard with the worry of it!" and, with chuckle, he took charge of the girl.

I thought this giving away of small children by their parents a most strange and inhuman thing to do; but, apparently, it was a long-established custom with these savages thus to show honor and esteem to one whose friendship they greatly prized. Early the next morning, we were again on our way to Hochelaga; and, with the aid of the savages, succeeded in getting both the ship and the two boats up those threatening rapids without serious harm, albeit my heart was in my mouth, as the saying is, a number of times. Above the rapids the river widened and appeared clear and untroubled before us, as we sailed rejoicingly up its quiet waters.

About the middle of that afternoon, as De Pont Brian and I stood on deck as usual, with our eyes devouring the beautiful shore-views, which, all too soon, swept by us, there came suddenly to our ears a dreadful bursting forth of shrill screams and shrieks, as if women or children were being murdered.

"What's that?" and De Pont Brian whirled quickly about. "There be no women on board this ship!"

The shrieking continued, increasing in volume and terror.

"Some of the crew must be murdering those young savages!" I cried out in horror. "Come, we must stop

it!" I ran quickly toward the companionway leading to the deck below, whence the screaming appeared to come, a great fear and horror in me. Officers and sailors were also hurrying below, dread and horror on all their faces.

What a startling scene met our eyes the moment we gained the deck!

There stood Goliath, bare to the waist, bending over the big tank, wherein the sailors sometimes bathed, with a great hand holding one of the savage boys in the water of the tank and the other scrubbing him with one of the cook's brushes, while the soap and water and foam streamed down the terror-stricken lad's face and into his eyes and wide-open yelling mouth, from the lather Goliath had already worked up in the hair of his head. Around the shrieking boy stood the three other savage children, who had been given into the care of Goliath, their heads and shoulders just showing above the water in the tank, their mouths wide open and screaming, their glistening black eyes round and big with terror and fixed on the giant and the white foaming head of the savage boy in his hands. Doubtless, none of them had ever before seen soap and knew not of its wild foaming when well mixed with water and hair; and the sight of their comrade's dark head and body apparently turning into white foam before their very eyes sent an awful fear and dread to the depths of their superstitious young souls.

As for Goliath himself, he was mumbling and grumbling to himself in that thunderous undertone of his, as he worked with brush and soap, now rubbing and soaping the poor lad, now thrusting him quickly under the water and out again, a look of seriousness, very comical to see, on his big face; and so intent on his Battle with Savage Dirt was he that he did not note our coming,

until, after our first moment of astoundment, we all sent forth a great shout of laughter. Truly it was the most comical sight I have ever seen to this day!

At the sound of our laughter, Goliath paused long enow in his good work to glance up at us and grin broadly.

"There be some standing here, twisting their bellies with laughter, until the dirt on them cracks," he declared, "who should come under my soap and water and brush next. But, by the skin on my bones! the ocean would be the only fitting tub for the scrubbing of them, because of the great quantity of water that'll be needed!" He chuckled and grinned and then, without more ado, he returned to his scrubbing. But now, as he scrubbed, he hummed a cradle-song— Truly I thought it sounded like a mother bear humming a lullaby to her baby!

When he had scrubbed and soaped and rinsed the boy to his satisfaction, he lifted him out of the tank and, standing him on his feet in front of him, shining with soap and cleanliness, he regarded him with critical eyes.

"Clean as the barkless trunk of a dead pine tree after a heavy rain!" he declared. "Of a certainty, I did a good job on him. Now the next one." He thrust forth a great hand and seized another savage.

In like manner he scrubbed and soaped and rinsed him; and, thus working, like a washwoman over a giant tub, he washed all the small savages, who, seeing that no harm had come to the first boy washed, now made no further outcries, not even when the soapy water got into their eyes. When he had them all washed, he stood them up in a row before him; and, after a critical glance over each one, he declared that he had done a fine job. Then, whirling suddenly about, he seized one of the men

near him, who had been his crudest and worst word-tormenter, lifted him up bodily and threw him into the tank of dirty, soapy water.

"There, soak you your dirt until I come back. Mayhap, I will then try to get some of the dirt off both your body and tongue." He chuckled and grinned and then hurried away with his four small savages, followed by the uproarious laughter of the men at the sally and ducking of the blatant wiseacre.

CHAPTER XXVI

"WATCH HIS EYES, YUON, WATCH HIS EYES!"

NOW the river lay smooth and prosperous before us and we sailed on our way without the loss of an hour for over a week, finding all the country through which we passed to our liking and very beautiful and fertile to look on. But the sameness of it all and our not being permitted to go ashore, on account of the lateness of the season, caused a certain dullness to afflict us; and, at Captain Cartier's suggestion, De Pont Brian and I resumed our sword-play teaching, which had been somewhat neglected of late, to drive the megrims away.

True to his promise, Du Val appeared at our first gathering and most courteously begged me to give him a lesson in swordsmanship, with the famous De Valour Sword, and especially in that trick of jerking the sword out of an opponent's hand, which, somehow, he had not been able to master as yet. As he spoke these words his teeth showed whitely in that lip-curling smile, which always made me think of the threatening snarl of a dog.

In a moment sufficient space had been cleared on the deck for our sword-play; and, in another, Du Val and I, with our swords in our hands, confronted each other. Then I saw that all the noblemen and the officers present had formed a circle about the two of us and that back of them showed the eager faces of sailors. Evidently this coming sword-play betwixt Du Val and me had awakened great interest. Apparently they thought that some of the trouble betwixt us, notwithstanding his

friendliness of late, might crop out in our sword-play; and, if it did, all wished to be there to see what happened.

As for myself, I liked not the coming of that teeth-showing smile, nor the light I saw in Du Val's eyes, as he confronted me. To me it seemed an evil light and it put me somewhat on my guard—but against what? I knew not.

A moment before we engaged, De Pont Brian stepped quickly to my side and, making the excuse of arranging my clothes about my shoulders, he bent over me so that his mouth was close to my ear.

"Watch his eyes, Yuon! watch his eyes!" he whispered warningly. "Beware, that he plays you no trick!" and, with that, he stepped quickly back and the sword-play began.

From the first I noted a cautious intensity in the thrusts and parries of Du Val. Also I could see that he had improved in swordsmanship since that first day; but I was still his master. For, mayhap, three minutes we thrust and parried, until we were well warmed up and our muscles were limbered, with naught of advantage to either.

Then I said, "Watch me closely, for now I attempt to take the sword from your hand!"

"I watch," he replied, that lip-curling smile coming again on his face and the evil look back into his eyes.

I made the three preliminary thrusts required to get your opponent in the proper position for the attack, watching Du Val's eyes closely.

At that instant I saw a flash of fire come into them and, taking a swift half-step toward me, he made a quick thrust and—I know not how it happened—slipped and stumbled and plunged forward and downward

violently, in such a manner that he would have empaled himself on my sword, had I not swiftly changed its direction and, in so doing, of necessity, left my body unfended for an instant. In that instant, the buttoned point of his sword, driven by the weight of his falling body (it was impossible now for him to stop the momentum given to it by his fall) struck me in the midst of my belly with such force that I was driven violently backward, not knowing whether or not I had received a death-thrust, and all the breath knocked out of me. I heard De Pont Brian give a gasping cry as he sprang forward and caught me in his arms.

For a moment all was confusion and darkness in my mind and a great pain was in my belly. Then I began to see things clearly again. My first act was to thrust my hand downward, where my hurt was. To my surprise, I felt no blood flowing.

"Quiet! Quiet, Yuon, for a moment!" whispered De Pont Brian, who now had me in his arms. "Bless the blessed saints! No serious harm has been done you!"

I now looked about me. The first thing I saw was Du Val, standing directly in front of me, staring down, in a dazed sort of a way, at the sword in his hand. The blade had been shattered for nearly half its length. I wondered greatly how this came about. He looked up and saw me in De Pont Brian's arms and instantly leaped to my side.

"I—I—I know not how this happened," he stammered, "only that one of my feet slipped on something and I stumbled—fell, at the moment I made a thrust at you. 'Fore God, I could not stop the momentum of that thrust! The point of my sword must have struck you! See!" and he held up the broken blade before my eyes. "Saints above me, I trust I did not wound you!" and

again his eyes went wonderingly to his shattered blade.

"No," I answered, for by now I had enow breath back in me to speak. "You only knocked the breath out of me and left a great pain in its place. I would see what this pain looks like. Wilt help De Pont Brian here get me to my cabin?" I was still so weak I could hardly stand.

"Most willingly," he answered, and his arm went around me. "I—I hope you do not hold me in any way blameworthy for this accident, De Valour. I—God in heaven, I might have killed you!"

"True, you might," I answered, mayhap somewhat ungraciously; "but you did not. In an hour's time, I'll be as good as ever. So give yourself no more blame in the matter. An accidental slip or tumble is always a possible danger in sword-play. Think no more on it; but help De Pont Brian get me quickly to my cabin. My bunk would feel most comfortable under my back for a few minutes."

By this time, seeing that no serious harm had been done me, the excitement of the men, who had crowded close around us, had somewhat quieted down; but, as De Pont Brian and Du Val, with me betwixt them, made our way through them, I could but note that many a suspicious glance was cast toward Du Val.

"Thanks, Du Val," I said, as soon as I lay on my back on my bunk in my cabin. "Do not let this accident trouble your mind. Now I feel as if I would sleep," and I stretched out my hand to him in token that I wished him to go.

He hesitated a moment, his eyes going a bit suspiciously, I thought, to his broken blade, then coming swiftly back to my face. I could see that he was most anxious to know what it was about my body that the

buttoned point of his sword had struck to thus shatter its good blade—but still I held out my hand, for that was the very thing I did not wish him to know; and, suddenly, he seized the hand, shook it heartily enow and hurried from the cabin.

"Mother of Mercy! Could it be possible that that stumbling-fall was no accident?" De Pont Brian exclaimed, the moment the door closed behind him. "I thought——"

"Not a word more of that now," I broke in. "I would first know to what good fortune I owe my life; for, of a certainty, his sword would have run me through, had not something stayed its point. I would see what that something was." I began opening my clothes, so that I could get at the spot where the point of his sword struck.

In a moment the mystery of Du Val's shattered blade and my own escape from death was solved. You will remember that I now wore a portion of the Aztec jewels sewed in a belt buckled around my waist under my clothes. Now it so chanced that, next to the buckle of this belt, rested, in its pocket, the largest and flattest of the jewels, set in a heavy frame of some kind of hard metal. I know not what kind. The button on the sword point had struck this jewel, had been caught and held there by the heavy frame so that it did not slip, and the blade itself, not being able to break or pierce the jewel, had been shattered against it by the force of the blow, the breath knocked out of me and the bruise given that had caused me so great pain.

"My God, Yuon, that sword thrust would have killed you, had it not been for the Aztec jewel!" exclaimed De Pont Brian in horror, the moment his eyes rested on the jewel and its bent setting.

"Aye, it would have run me through, like a spit fowl for the button was broken by the force of the blow. Claude, your eyes watched our sword-play. Think you, there was aught back of that blow but an accident?"

"I—I know not of a certainty, Yuon. It was done so quickly, so unexpectedly! I saw his foot slip, saw him stumble, fall forward, just as he made a thrust with his sword. If it were not an accident, then he simulated an accident most cunningly and shrewdly. But, why should he wish to do you deadly hurt? I——"

There came a sharp rap on the door and Captain Cartier entered, hot with haste.

"What is this I hear, Yuon, of sword-play with Du Val, of his stumbling and falling, of a sword thrust that should have killed you, but brake his sword instead? God's life! if he but tricked you, in order to best you; and, in so doing, risked your killing, I'll—But, what means this?" His eyes went quickly to the exposed belt, still buckled around my body. I—" He bent quickly and examined the jewel and the great bruise on my body back of it. "God's mercy! Yuon, that thrust would have killed you, had it not been for that broad Aztec jewel!" He straightened quickly and turned to De Pont Brian. "I saw not this sword-play. Tell me, was it played in all honor? 'Tis already whispered among the men that Du Val fell purposely, in order to get in that thrust and win the bout; and, in so doing, took a fearful chance of getting himself killed or of killing Yuon. What think you, De Pont Brian?"

"I know not what to think. The fall and the thrust came so suddenly and unexpectedly that my eyes could not follow the action. But, what was there on the deck floor to cause his foot to slip or to stumble and himself to fall? I——"

"Pardon me," I broke in; "but a thought has come to me. Since we have no proof that he meant evil to me, had we not better give him the benefit of the doubt and think no more on it? In truth, such an accident as this might happen, has happened. Once, while at sword-play with my father, my foot slipped and I stumbled and I fell forward, at the moment I thrust with my sword, and I would have run my father through, had it not been for his great skill. Aye, let it go as an accident—this time."

I saw both Captain Cartier and De Pont Brian glance sharply at me, as I said those last two words; and, I fancy, each had a thought as to my meaning back of them.

"Sobeit," declared Captain Cartier, after a moment's steadfast look into my face. "We'll give him the benefit of the doubt, 'this time'; but, there had better be no other time. Now," and again his eyes sought my face, "we must act as if we had not the slightest doubt but that it was an accident—and be on our guard! Aye, Yuon?"

"So I think," I answered. "Now I would rest and sleep, if I can; for that blow gave me a dreadful sickness and has left me so weak that I scarce have strength to keep my eyes open— But, I am sure, I'll be all right after a short rest and sleep," I added quickly, as I saw the look of concern that came on Captain Cartier's face.

He made no answer, but bent quickly and carefully examined the bruise. A moment later a look of relief came on his face and he straightened up.

"You are your own best doctor, Yuon," he said, "Sleep and rest are your best medicine. Better keep to your bed for the rest of the day. In the morning, I prophesy, that you'll be as good as ever, save for a sore belly. But, Yuon, as sure as you be alive now, you would

not now be alive, had it not been for that blessed Aztec jewel! Bless the good saints for that, my lad!" With a warm clasp of my hand and a warmer look into my eyes, he hurried from the cabin; and I, almost immediately, fell into a deep sleep.

CHAPTER XXVII

HOCHELAGA—AND A SAVAGE WELCOME

THE next day we came to a stretch of the river, where we could not possibly go with our ship, on account of the great shallowness and swiftness and fierceness of the water. Captain Cartier at once determined to leave the ship here and go forward to Hochelaga with only the two boats. Accordingly we at once made the two boats ready, placing in them food, munitions, presents for the savages and such other things as we were like to need, until we had all that our captain thought we could carry safely, together with the officers and the young noblemen, who were to accompany us, and twenty-eight mariners. We had no difficulty in passing up the rapids in our two boats.

Now, for the next two or three days we sailed on up the river, untroubled by the weather or dangerous rapids. We saw many savages on the shore, who, when they caught sight of us, came running down to the river bank, dancing and singing and otherwise showing great joy at our coming. We did not go ashore, nor stop to talk with any of them; for Captain Cartier was now in a great hurry to get to Hochelaga and on his way back to where he had left his two large ships, before the cold of winter froze the water in the river and made his passage down it impossible for months—And already it was October!

Now, as we came near Hochelaga, we all began to feel a great excitement. I could see a new brightness in

the eyes of Captain Cartier and a quickening in his steps and I noted that he spent the greater part of the time in the fore part of his boat and that not five minutes passed without his glancing up the river.

As for De Pont Brian and me, we could think of little else, talk of little else and dream of little else than this great town of the wild men, of which we had heard so many wonders. Every moment we were glancing up the river, at every turn we made around a bend our hearts throbbed anew and we strained our eyes for the first glimpse of Hochelaga.

At last, as we made one of these turns, we met a boat filled with savages coming down the river. At sight of us they showed great excitement, but no fear. In some mysterious way a rumor of our coming had passed on ahead of us all the way up the river. How this had been done was something of a mystery to all of us.

The savages in the boat greeted us with a great shout and stopped their boat and waited for our coming; but Captain Cartier would not pause, even for greetings or questionings, save those we could shout to them. As we passed them, he stood up in his boat and shouted the name, "Hochelaga!" and pointed up the river. Both De Pont Brian and I shouted, "Hochelaga!" and pointed up the river. I think every man in the two boats shouted, "Hochelaga!" and pointed up the river.

At length the savages understood us and a big chief stood up in his boat and pointed up the river, to where a huge rock on an island thrust itself up above the ground for many feet, like the great shoulder on an enormous sleeping giant, and shouted back, "Hochelaga!"

Then I knew that at last we had come within sight of that huge rock, near which we had been told the

savages had built their great town of Hochelaga! At the sight of it, every man of us in the two boats stood up and sent forth three as great shouts of gladness as was ever heard, and all watched, with the greatest eagerness, as we came near to the rock.

At last we had come to the goal of our adventurings, to the mysterious, the mighty town of the savages, Hochelaga!

The wild men in the boat had turned about and were now following in our wake, singing and shouting. As we proceeded up the river, other boats, filled with savages, shot out from the river bank and joined the procession, all singing and shouting in the most gladsome manner. The shores soon became lined with joyously shouting, singing and dancing men, women and children, the men dancing in one group, the women in another and the children in yet another group. The savages in the boats now gathered about us in great numbers and began tossing fish and cakes of their bread made of millet [1] to us in such great store that it seemed to be falling down from heaven.

When our captain saw all this gladness and rejoicing at our coming and the great friendliness manifested toward us by these savages, he bade De Pont Brian and Goliath and me keep close to him and went on shore and with us went all the young noblemen and such of the mariners as could be spared from the boats. The moment we set our feet on the ground, the savages gathered so thickly around us that we could see naught but savages, hear naught but savages. In very truth, their joyous shouts and cries and songs came near deafening us. They could not have made more of us, if they had

[1] Indian corn.—E. M.

thought we were all lesser gods, or at least kings, as, doubtless, most of them did think.

Many of the women folk came with their babies in their arms and would not be satisfied until Captain Cartier or some of his company had touched the babies with their hands. Then they went about shouting and singing with mirth and gladness, as if the touch of our hands had wrought marvels in the child.

As usual, Goliath, on account of his size and imposing appearance, received the most attention, especially from the women with the babies. It was most amusing to watch the expression on the big fellow's face, as these savage women crowded around him and fought among themselves for an opportunity to thrust forth their babies so that he might touch them with one of his great hands. I verily believe that they took him for the greatest god or spirit among us and thought that a touch of his hand would forever afterward bless and protect the child. At length I could see that he was becoming greatly disgusted with all this close crowding of the savage women and the touching of their babies; and I knew by the strained look in his eyes that he was desperately seeking some way of frightening them off.

"Kiss the babies! Kiss the babies, Goliath, and all the mothers will love you forever!" I cried, greatly rejoiced at the situation.

This seemed to give Goliath the idea he was seeking; for, when, the next moment, a plump young savage thrust out her baby for him to touch, he suddenly seized the child in his two great hands, jerked him out of his mother's hands, opened wide his mouth so that the teeth showed in a most hideous manner and made as if he would eat the baby before his mother's very eyes.

With a piercing scream of horror and fright the

mother leaped upon him, tore the child from his arms and fled screaming. At the same time there was a great and most amusing backing away of all the mothers from him, who now all held their babies close in their arms and stared at him with horror-stricken eyes—from a distance. I think that they now thought him more of a devil than a god and reverenced him all the more for it.

"You made the most dreadful ogre I ever saw, Goliath, when you showed your big teeth in such a hideous manner," laughed Captain Cartier, when the confusion caused by this incident died down. "I do not wonder that the woman thought you were going to eat her baby."

"That's what I wanted her to think," grinned the giant with that chuckling growl of his.

After this rejoicing of the savages had lasted for something more than half an hour, our captain, seeing their loving kindness toward us and how they rejoiced in entertaining us, caused all the women to be separated from the men and set in an orderly array by themselves. Then he gave the women beads, made out of shining tin, small mirrors and other such trifles, and knives to some of the men, all of which the savages received in as gladsome a manner as was ever seen.

When this had been done, we all returned to our boats, it being now late in the day and the sun about to go down.

That night all these savages gathered on the shore as near our boats as they could get and, making great fires, danced merrily around them, frequently calling out to us, "Aquiaze! Aquiaze!" which is to say in their language, "Mirth and safety be with you!" And so passed the night.

The next day, very early in the morning, Captain

Cartier made ready to visit this great savage town of Hochelaga and pay his respects to the savage king who ruled there. In order to impress the king and his savages, he dressed himself in the most gorgeous clothes that he had; and bade De Pont Brian and Goliath and me and the young noblemen, who were to go with us, to do likewise. I thought our gallant captain looked very grand and noble in his colorful silks and satins and gold braid, with a scarlet-lined velvet cloak thrown over his shoulders.

As for Goliath, I knew that the very sight of him in all the grandeur of his fine clothes, which that great body of his carried in such a handsome manner, would cause the savages to think that, of a certainty, he must be a god, or, at least a spirit greatly superior to ordinary mortals. In truth, he did make a most imposing appearance in his grand clothes, with him standing, as he did, nearly seven feet high on his bare soles and having, withal, the most splendidly proportioned body I have ever seen.

Captain Cartier took with him twenty mariners, all that could be spared from the care of the boats; and these he had come well armed and wearing their burnished corselets, all looking very brave and imposing in their military trappings.

As soon as we had come on the shore, three savages, acting as guides, led us by a well-beaten path through a forest of as great and goodly oaks as any I ever saw in France. It was October. The air was cold and sharpening to the blood. The leaves were changing their colors and falling from the trees. Squirrels and other small animals were gathering their winter supply of nuts.

I thought it the fairest and most delightsome country

I had ever seen. Mayhap, this was partly because I had now been for so long a time on board a ship, I who had been brought up near the most pleasant lands and fairest forests of France and had never been on board a ship for as long a time before. Mayhap, it was partly this that now sent my blood glowing through my veins and put new vigor and gladness into my body and gave me a greater appreciation of the glories of the forest through which we were passing.

When we had thus walked some five or six miles, we came suddenly to where the woods opened upon both sides of us and we saw in the midst of the opening that great rock or mountain, which we had seen from afar, towering above us. Betwixt us and the great rock were many fields of a corn somewhat like our millet, from which they make their bread and cakes, even as we do.

I thought the great rock made a most glorious sight, shooting up abruptly from the banks of the river to a height of some six or seven hundred feet, wrapped about, with what appeared like a great cloak, woven out of the trees of the forest, now gorgeously colored by the early frosts of coming winter.

"What a glorious mountain!" I exclaimed, unable to keep my admiration inside of me. "Truly, 'tis a royal mountain!"

"The very name for it, Yuon! We will call it Mount Royal!"[1] declared Captain Cartier.

Below this mountain, encompassed about by the great fields of corn, we saw, at last, the mysterious town of Hochelaga, the wonder of which had for so long filled

[1] This great mount is called Mount Royal to this day, and from it is derived the name of the beautiful city of Montreal (Mount Royal), which now occupies the scene of Captain Cartier's adventures at Hochelaga, 393 years before these words were written.—E. M.

our ears. From where we now were we could see only its high encircling palisades, made from the trunks of trees, set firmly upright in the ground and fitted closely one to the other. There were three walls of these trunks, placed one within the other and all completely encircling the town. Only one opening or gate appeared to give entrance through this triple wall; and out of this opening the savages were now pouring, like disturbed bees out of a hive, and rushing, shouting, singing and dancing, toward us. In a moment we were surrounded by many hundreds of them, men, women and children, all striving to get as close to us as could possibly be without too great roughness and all showing the greatest joy at our coming. Thus, escorted by these joyful savages, we came to the encircling palisades and entered through the gateway into the town itself.

As you may well believe, I was all eyes during these tumultuous scenes; for, never before had I seen or even dreamt of anything like them. Everything I saw was new and interesting to me. The crowding, tumultuous savages, the three high and strong walls of tree trunks, with which the town was surrounded, the curious long houses inside the enclosure, everything within sight of my eyes awakened my curiosity and aroused my interest. Truly, this was a most interesting adventure!

I saw De Pont Brian's eyes beginning to sparkle the moment we entered the town and he looked about him.

"Why, Yuon," he said and I could see admiration and surprise in his eyes as he spoke, "this is a most strongly fortified town! I did not suppose these savages had the wit to build such a defense against an attack from the outside. I do not believe that even a French army could take it without cannon. These walls of tree trunks are too strong to be battered down by anything short of

artillery. They must be at least thirty feet high, too high to be scaled in the face of the hundreds who could stand on those platforms, built inside of each wall near its top, and shoot their arrows and throw their spears and hurl down great stones on the attackers. See, they have the stones already there!" He pointed to great piles of stones, some of them as large as a man's head, which we could see on all the platforms within sight. "And they have the ladders ready at hand, with which to climb to the platforms. There they lie on the ground under each platform. Truly, Yuon, this must be a most warlike nation!"

"Look at their houses, Claude," I broke in. "Didst ever see their like? Each must be at least fifty paces long and some twelve to fifteen broad; and all are covered with broad pieces of bark, very finely and cunningly joined together, so as to keep out the wind and the rain and the snow and the cold of winter. There must be at least fifty of these houses, each big enow to hold hundreds. I am going to have a look inside of one of them at the first opportunity. It must be a curious-looking place."

At this moment our guides halted in the midst of a large open space, made by these long houses being built in the form of a square around it; and here our guides made signs for us to pause.

Hardly had we halted, when, to our astoundment and embarrassment, we were beset by all the women and maidens in the town, albeit, in a most friendly manner —too friendly, at least for comfort, I thought. Many of the women had their arms full of babies. They crowded around us as closely as they could come. Then, as many as could, began to rub our faces, our arms, whatsoever part of our bodies they could touch, with

their hands, weeping and laughing for very joy, according to their different natures. At the same time those who had babies in their arms, implored us, by many signs, to but touch them with our hands, as if they thought us gods, who could perform miracles by the touch of a hand.

And, in very truth, we must have seemed to them like most strange and marvelous beings, with our white skins, our bearded faces, our strange clothes, our harquebuses and halberds, our shining helmets and cuirasses.

Again Goliath was the chiefest center of attraction. The women and the maidens, drawn by the grandeur of his appearance, fought among themselves to get within rubbing distance of him. Especially did they strive to stroke his long black hair, to rub his bewhiskered cheeks, to caress, even to pull, the three outstanding braids of his long black beard, doubtless to see if they really grew from his face. Some of them even got down on their hands and knees and crawled betwixt the legs of the others, in order to get where they could stroke his great legs. Truly he was most popular with these savage women!

As for Goliath, to my vast surprise, he actually acted as if he liked all this attention from these too ardent and admiring women. He swelled out his chest, threw back his shoulders, stretched his great body to its highest and received their adoration and homage, as if he were a king in very truth. Whenever he caught our surprised and amused eyes on him, he winked and smirked in triumph, as much as to say, "Well, you see I am not too old to be admired by women folk"; and, whenever he laid a hand on one of their babies, he did it in so grand a manner that De Pont Brian and I were like to burst ourselves with laughter every time we saw him do

it. In very truth, it was marvelous to see how he apparently had overcome his previous dislike for the worshipful adoration of these savage folk and with what patience he received their rubbings of his body, pullings of his whiskers and thrustings forth of their babies for him to touch. Evidently he had come to like playing the god to these benighted savages.

But, in a little while, there came an end to this scene with the savage women; for the men came and drove every one of them away, to the great satisfaction of all of us, saving, possibly, Goliath.

CHAPTER XXVIII

STRANGE CEREMONIES AND ODD CUSTOMS

NOW all the men sat down on the ground around us, as if they were about to witness some comedy or show. A number of women hurried forward, each bearing a square mat, like to a small carpet. These they spread over the ground near where we were and motioned us to sit down on them.

For a minute or two we all now sat silent and wondering. Then I saw ten men approaching, carrying on their shoulders the Lord and King of that country, sitting on a great stag's skin. As they walked these men cried out loudly, "Agouhanna! Agouhanna!" the name of the king. They sat him down in front of Captain Cartier on the carpet of mats, which the women had spread for us, all making signs, as they did this, that he was their Lord and King.

I did not think that he looked very much like either a lord or a king. He was no whit cleaner, nor better clothed than any of the others, except that he had on his head a sort of a crown, made from the skins of porcupines, with the quills dyed a bright red and arranged so that they looked somewhat like a red wreath. He was shaking with palsy, his legs were shrunken and helpless and his skin was full of wrinkles. He looked to me like an old man; but his attendants made us understand, by their signs, that he was only fifty years old. Nathless he saluted our captain very bravely, then all the rest of us and made us all gladsome signs of wel-

come. When he had done this, he showed his shrunken legs to Captain Cartier and made signs to show that he wished him to lay his hands on them. Our captain, out of kindness and pity for his infirmities, did so, even rubbing them and stroking them with his own hands, very tenderly.

Evidently the king thought that by the laying on of the hands of Captain Cartier, his withered limbs might be cured, or, at least, helped. I marveled that this heathen and savage king, in this far-off and unknown New World, should thus believe of Captain Cartier, even as many of the heathens did of our Blessed Saviour in his day.

Now followed a most strange and hardly-to-be-believed thing. I saw, coming from out the surrounding houses, a great throng of miserable folk. I verily believe that all the sick, the halt, the blind, the maimed and the helpless were in that throng. Among them I saw some very aged men, who, to my astoundment, were so old that the hairs of their eyelids came down and covered their cheeks.[1] These unfortunate people were all brought before Captain Cartier, to the end that he might touch them and heal them; for it seemed to these simple heathen folk that a god had come down from heaven that they might be healed of their miseries.

Captain Cartier, taking pity on their infirmities and seeing how great was their confidence in him, did recite over them the chapter of the Holy Gospel of St. John, which beginneth with the blessed words, "In the beginning was the word," touching each one that was diseased, as he spake and praying to God not only to

[1] This statement, concerning the length of the hairs in the eyelids of these very old men, is taken direct from what is thought to be Captain Cartier's own account of this voyage to the New World, as translated by Hakluyt.—E. M.

heal them but to open their hearts and make them willing to receive the Holy Word. After which he took a service-book and read in a loud voice, so that all present could hear, all the passion of Christ.

I was astounded to see all these savages listen to his words, with so marvelous a quietness and so great an awe writ on their faces, as one could scarcely hope to see in any cathedral in France.

When all these ceremonies had come to an end, Captain Cartier caused all the savages to be arranged in a certain order. Then he gave them presents; to the men, hatchets and knives; to the women, beads and other small trifles. He even cast rings, counters and brooches, made of tin, to the children, whereat all were greatly rejoiced.

When these gifts had been given, the savages conducted us, very joyfully, through the town. This was the most interesting part of our visit to De Pont Brian and me, because of the many strange and curious things we saw.

These savages did not live at all in the manner we do in France. Their houses were not a whit like our houses, inside or out. Outside they were covered with broad pieces of bark, stripped from trees and very closely and cunningly joined together, so that little rain, or snow, or cold, or wind could come inside. The bark was supported by a frame made of long poles, tied together with strips of skin. Each house was, as I have afore written down, about fifty paces long by twelve or fifteen wide. De Pont Brian and I paced one of them and those were the figures we got. The inside was still more strange. It was divided into many rooms, one for each family, running side by side in a row on each side of the house. Betwixt these two rows of rooms was an

open space, where they made their fires, did their cooking and had a common gathering-place. Above the fires was an opening in the roof, wherethrough goes some of the smoke and the smells of the cooking and other things; for, of a certainty, these savages do not think that cleanliness always walks with godliness. They sleep on the bark of trees laid on the ground and overspread with the skins of certain wild beasts, wherewith they also clothe and cover themselves.

As we walked down that long open space in the middle of the house, we saw some of the savage women making their bread; and a strange sight it was to French eyes, for they use no oven. First they beat or ground the corn into a powder, like unto flour. This they did in a curious manner. They have a certain piece of wood, made hollow, like unto those wherein we beat our hemp. Into this hollow they pour their corn and beat and crush the grain into a powder with a beetle of hard wood. Then they make a paste of this powder and form the paste into cakes, which they lay on a broad flat stone, heated very hot, and then they cover it with other hot stones. Thus they bake their bread without any oven. Also they make different kinds of pottage out of the corn and out of peas and beans, of which they have a great store.

They have many kinds of fruit, each in its season, so that they live very well, at least during the summer months and when the hunting is good; but I have heard it said that they do suffer much sometimes from lack of food during the long winter months, being an improvident folk and not knowing well how to preserve different kinds of food for so long a time. Albeit, they do have certain kinds of vessels, as big as our butts or tuns, wherein they keep fish, which they dry in the sun

in the summer and preserve, without any salt, to eat in the winter. They use no salt to flavor any of their food, which gives to all of their cooking a flat and most unsavory taste, at least to our palates.

They showed us a most curious substance, which they think the most precious thing in all the world. It is white as new-fallen snow. They call it Esurgny and take it from a river, which they call Cornibotz, in such a strange and terrible manner that it is hardly to be believed. When they capture an enemy in war, or when one of their own folk is deserving of death, they first kill him. Then they take certain kinds of knives and give the body great slashes and strokes with them upon the buttocks, flanks, thighs and shoulders and cast it, so mangled, down to the very bottom of the river they call Cornibotz, at a place where they know the Esurgny to be. After ten or twelve hours, they take it up again and in the cuts and clinging to the torn flesh and skin they find the Esurgny or Cornibotz, as some call them. They make beads of it and wear them about their necks, even as we do chains of gold and silver, and think them as precious as we do pearls and diamonds.[1]

To me this Esurgny seemed to be nothing more than a part of the interior of the shell, taken from certain small shell-fish.

These savages are most ignorant of many things. They have no wealth or valued possessions of any kind, save this Esurgny, nor do they care for any, since they do not even know that it exists. Mayhap, for this reason, they are really more contented and happy and have less

[1] This description of the manner in which these savages secure their Esurgny or wampum is taken, almost word for word, from the account of this voyage written by Captain Cartier himself or by one who accompanied him. Hakluyt's translation is used.—E. M.

troubles, than many white folk, who have great wealth and the things that wealth can buy. At least they are a care-free and happy people, expecting nothing and getting an abundance of it, according to our views of living.

At the end of our tour through the town, Captain Cartier caused a fanfare of trumpets and other musical instruments to be sounded, to the great delight of the savages, who were all made exceeding merry by these lively sounds.

Now we made ready to take our leave of these friendly savages and departed from Hochelaga; and with us went many of the savages, both men and women, who, at our request, brought us to Mount Royal, which stands about a league from the town.

We climbed at once to the top of the mountain and from there had a most wonderful view of the country round about us, the air being marvelously clear. To the north and the south, at some little distance, rose many fair hills, covered with great forests of as fine trees as might be seen anywhere; and, lying in betwixt, lay a goodly and fertile-looking country, level and smooth, ready for the hands of the husbandman. Winding among these pleasant fields, hills, valleys, and forests we saw the great river, up which we had voyaged for so many days. We could see that it flowed from out a vast unknown country to the southwest of us, which, apparently was without end or limit.

The savages, who were with us, told us with signs that there were three more such falls or rapids in the river, like to that which had caused us to leave our ship; and that, these falls being safely passed, we might sail untroubled for the space of three months more up the river. They also pointed to where, down from the hills to the west of us and emptying into the north side of

the river, flowed another great stream,[1] which also came from the west.

So soon as the savages had told us of this river, one of them turned to Captain Cartier and, taking hold of the chain of his whistle, which was of silver, and then turning to me, who chanced to be standing at the side of our captain, he laid his hand on the dagger-haft hanging at my side, which was of yellow copper gilt, and indicated that such stuff as this came from up that river. All this he did without sign or question on our part. He also showed us that the people who lived there were an evil folk, who all went armed, even to their finger-ends. He declared that they made a sort of armor out of cords and wood, finely and cunningly wrought together, and were continually at war, one against the other.

Our captain showed him some red copper and, looking toward that country whence this river flowed, asked him, with signs, if any of this metal came from there.

The savage shook his head and answered, no; but showed that a like metal came from the country through which the Saguenay flowed, which is a land lying directly contrary to the other.

Now, you must understand that all these things were made known to us through signs and motions, which were difficult to understand rightly; and, mayhap, I have written down some of these matters, not as the savages meant us to understand them, but as our own minds interpreted their meanings. This, to make plain that any errors found herein, at a later day, were not errors of my intentional making.

As we stood on the top of Mount Royal, delighting our eyes with the beautiful scene spread out all around

[1] The Ottawa. These savages were sometimes badly mixed in their geography.—E. M.

us, a scene no white man had ever viewed before, I saw a glow come upon the face of Captain Cartier and a light into the eyes with which he swept the surrounding country.

"What a wonderful country this is to give our King!" he said and I could see that he was deeply moved. "Look at those beautiful forest-covered hills, valleys and mountains; at those wide-stretching plains; at this great river, flowing down to the very ocean; at this huge rock, towering like a mighty citadel, in their very midst! Did eyes of man ever rest on a fairer prospect? or a scene better fitted to give birth to a great city? a mighty nation? I see it all! Here on this rock where we now stand, I see a strong fortress, a great city; I see the surrounding hills, valleys, plains and forests dotted with thriving villages and farms, where dwell thousands of happy and prosperous Frenchmen and their wives and children. As surely as God reigns and France lives, all this will come true!—Mayhap, not in our generation, not under our King, but in some generation, under some king. God would not make so fair and fertile and glorious a country for the sole possession of wild beasts and benighted savages! Aye, aye, men, we do great deeds, albeit we be but humble explorers!"

He paused and slowly his eyes passed once again over that wondrous scene, the dreamy look in them deepening. Then, suddenly, like one just awakened from a dream, he started and looked quickly about him.

"I have been dreaming again," he said and smiled. "An explorer must have his dreams. But now I am awake. We must return at once to our boats. In the morning we start back down the river. I dare not delay longer. I feel the winter cold strike my bones. It would not be good for us, if the Ice King should throw his

chain across the river before we get back to our ships, near Stadacona."

So we returned at once to the boats, followed by a great multitude of these friendly savages, who, in their desire to please us, gladly took upon their backs any of us who appeared weary of the long walk and so carried them even to the boats.

CHAPTER XXIX

A RACE WITH THE ICE KING

LONG before the sun rose the next morning, Captain Cartier had all in readiness for our departure; but early as it was, the shores were lined with savages and the river covered with boatloads of them, all grieving sorely at our going. Also they brought us great supplies of food, more than our boats permitted us to carry. They would have made us long speeches, telling us how grieved they were at our going; but Captain Cartier, in his haste to be on his way down the river, would have none of them, to the delight of De Pont Brian, and gave his command to hoist sails, even as their king stood up in his boat to give his oration; and, the wind being favorable, the sails filled at once and we were off.

The savages shouted and ran along the shore following us, as did those in boats, for a long distance; but at last, just as the sun rose and filled the east with splendor, we saw the last of these boats, loaded with our savage friends, pause, while they shouted and waved their farewells to us; and then turned about and started back up the river. Thus, with the bright morning light shining full upon them and making a glory of their wild surroundings, passed these savages out of our sight, out of our lives.

I do not think that I shall ever see a more friendly, a more hospitable folk than were these savages, in their

treatment of us, during our short visit in their country. May the good God always be kind to them, benighted savages though they be!

Now began our race with the cold of winter down the great river. Every day the air grew chillier, the weather more threatening. Snow fell, the winds blew, thin ice began to form along the shores. Winter was coming fast after us. We came to those rapids where we had left the *Hermerillon*, passed down them safely and, with hardly a pause, transferred ourselves and our belongings to her; and the race down the river was on again.

The ice now became thicker and thicker, reached out its cold fingers farther and farther from the shores toward us. Sometimes, where the river widened and the current ran less swiftly, our ship had to break its way through thin ice. I liked not the sounds of the crunchings of that ice against the sides of the ship. It had in it the sound of the gnashings of icy teeth in icy jaws, eager to seize and hold us.

"Hurry! Hurry!" urged Captain Cartier. "The winters here are long and fearfully cold. The snow falls deeply. The water of the river freezes firmly. The Ice King comes swiftly after us. God have mercy on us, if he but catches us!"

And hurry we did, taking advantage of every favoring wind that blew, sailing by night, as well as by day, when possible, pausing for no visits with the savages along the shores; and ever, as we progressed, we could feel the breath of the Ice King growing colder and colder, coming nearer and nearer.

I think that every man on the ship realized what a dreadful thing for us it would be to have our ship

caught and held in the ice, in that wild unknown country, thousands of miles from the help of white men, without a chance of rescue, and with a long severely cold winter before us. We would not have even the warmth of proper clothing to protect us! We felt confident that we could face the winter with some assurance, once we were with the ships we had left at the Port of the Holy Cross, near Stadacona, where dwelt Donnacona and his friendly savages.

Could we win the race? Could we beat the Ice King to the Port of the Holy Cross? That was the question all were asking themselves and others.

I could see that our brave captain was sorely troubled, that each morning the anxiety deepened in his eyes as he noted the ever increasing thickness of the ice along the shores as he saw it ever coming nearer to our ship.

A great snowstorm came down upon us from out the northwest. For two days we could not see the shore and but dimly the surface of the river, because of the thickness of the falling snow; but on and on we sailed, albeit, we knew that there were dangerous rocks in the river and that our boats might run aground on the shore. We dared not stop. The Ice King was now closing in upon us. A great gloom, a great fear, came into all our hearts. We could not even tell where we were. In that white blankness we seemed deserted even of God!

Then, on the third morning, a strong wind came rushing down from the north and blew the snow-clouds away—and our glad eyes saw the morning sun shining on the snow-covered tops of the high cliffs at Stadacona. We had won our terrible race with the Ice King!

How we cheered and shouted at the sight! How beautiful the high cliffs looked in their cloaks of new-

fallen snow! How magnificent and stately seemed the tall trees in the white furs nature had thrown over their shoulders! In a moment the whole world had been transformed for us; and a great gladness took the place of the gloom and the fear that had been in our hearts!

Captain Cartier now ordered a salvo from our cannon to be fired, to tell those who had remained here with our two ships, the *Great Herminia* and the *Little Herminia,* of our coming; for we had not yet come in sight of where they lay in the Port of the Holy Cross. Some five minutes later there came to our ears the roars of their answering cannon. We all shouted joyously again at the sound, very glad to know that all seemed well with our comrades.

A few minutes later the savages, aroused by our hurrahing and the roars of the cannon, came running down to the shores, greatly excited, shouting their "Ho-hos!" and singing their songs of welcome and dancing in their gladness at our return.

A little farther and we came in sight of the two ships we had left here, all snug and safe in their harbor at the Port of the Holy Cross. What a joyous reunion that was! What a noise we all made with our many cries and shouts and greeting and loud laughter! And when, at last, our ship came to anchor betwixt the two other ships, it was not long before her decks were crowded with our excited comrades, all eager to hear of the happenings which had befallen us during our voyage up the great river, where no white man had ever gone before.

For the remainder of that day and until late at night we did little else but talk, talk, until our very tongues and brains were aweary, as again and again we narrated the tale of our voyage, told of the wonders of Hoche-

laga, of the great mountain, which our captain had named Mount Royal, of the beauties and fertility of the country through which we had passed and, above all, of the reception and the entertainment the King and the people of Hochelaga had given us. I think it must have been nearing one o'clock in the morning, when, at last, De Pont Brian and I found ourselves alone in our cabin, in our old cabin on board Captain Cartier's own ship, the *Great Herminia.*

" 'Tis like coming home again after a long absence," De Pont Brian said, the moment the cabin door closed behind us. "Everything appears to be just as we left it. I do not believe a soul has been in the room since we went away. Even the Evil Three seem to have neglected us. I do not see a thing that would indicate they had been in here during our absence. Now, what shall we do with the jewels?" and his eyes went quickly to my face. "Shall we keep them in our belts or restore them to their hiding-places? I think the hiding-places would be safer."

"So do I," I agreed. "Especially since they have proved their security so well. Besides, the Evil Three might waylay one or all of us. If they did, they would not then get the jewels. Also I do not like carrying so great a treasure around my waist everywhere I go. Yes, let us put them back in their old hiding-places."

So it was that we concealed the jewels where we had hidden them before, I in the hollow of the post to my bunk, and De Pont Brian in his secret hole in the wall. This done, I am sure we both felt safer and better.

Before I unscrewed the top of my post, I looked closely at the scratch I had made to see if it had been tampered with. Its two ends were in perfect alinement, just as I had left them, which I thought pretty good

evidence that the Evil Three had not yet discovered that my bunk-post was hollow.

"Now to bed," said De Pont Brian, as he started to undress.

CHAPTER XXX

A GREAT HORROR COMES UPON US

SO soon as Lord Donnacona heard of our return to the ships, he at once came to visit our captain; and with him came Taignoagny and Domagaia and many other savages, all seeming very glad to see us back. When the savages had performed their usual ceremonies of welcome, Lord Donnacona invited Captain Cartier and such as he cared to bring with him to come to Stadacona the next day and visit him and his people. Our captain gladly accepted the invitation and entertained Donnacona and his savages as pleasantly as might be, albeit, they had so acted, when we were about to set out for Hochelaga, as to deserve few favors from us.

As for Taignoagny and Domagaia, they were both very friendly now; and went about telling everybody they met what good friends they were of their white brothers.

Early the next day we set out to visit Lord Donnacona, in his own town of Stadacona,[1] about one league distant from our ships; and with us went fifty mariners, all bravely accoutered and making a most gallant and imposing appearance in their well-burnished corselets and helmets. Captain Cartier wanted all of us to make as imposing an appearance as possible, even as we did at

[1] As you will remember, this town occupied the present site of Quebec. —E. M.

Hochelaga; and, accordingly, we all clothed ourselves in our finest.

When we came near the town, the people came rushing out to greet us, singing and dancing, every one of them in a joyful manner, the men on one side and the women and the children on the other, as was their custom. I saw that De Pont Brian held both hands tightly over his ears, for he did not like their singing.

Captain Cartier made them some small presents, knives to the men and tin rings to the women and children, which all received as joyfully as if these trifles were things of great value.

Lord Donnacona and Taignoagny now brought us inside the town to show us their houses, which were like those we saw at Hochelaga, only, if possible, dirtier, and need not be described again.

In one of these houses we came upon a most curious and dreadful thing. We saw the skins of the tops of the heads of five men, with their hair still clinging to them, spread out on boards to dry, as we do parchment[1] Donnacona said that they were the skins of Toudamans, their most deadly enemies, which they had slain in battle; and that all the savages of this region took the skins from the tops of the heads of their enemies, when slain, and prized them greatly, as tokens of their valor.

When we had walked about the town and had seen many curious and interesting things and had been everywhere joyously received, we returned to the ships.

Now that winter had come down upon us, Captain Cartier determined to abide its storms and cold and snow where we were. Already the men we had left here, when we went to Hochelaga, had fortified the place by

[1] Scalps. The first record of the taking of scalps in this part of the New World.—E. M.

enclosing a part of the shore in front of the ships, with strong trunks of trees set upright very firmly in the ground and stoutly fastened together, like the palisades of the savages. Then they had dug a trench just outside the wall of trees and beset it with pieces of artillery taken from the ships and whatsoever things they could find that would add to the defense and shield them from the savages, should they turn against us. I saw that Captain Cartier was well pleased with this fortification and I am sure it gave comfort and confidence to all of us, for the savages outnumbered our small company many times.

De Pont Brian and I now passed many quiet, yet busy and pleasant days. All was new and interesting in our eyes. We visited the savages and made many friends among them, especially among the young men of our own age. We went hunting with them, when it was not too cold and the snow too deep, for we had need of all the fresh meat we could get. Those hunting days were delightsome days to us; for the hunter-instinct was strong in both of us. I do not think that I shall ever forget the thrill that went through me, when I saw my first moose go tumbling down into the snow at the roar of my harquebus. What a monster he seemed! How the great body sent the snow flying! I can still see it, if I close my eyes! Then there was an abundance of deer and other food animals and many kinds of eatable birds. Also many fur-bearing beasts, from small animals no larger than rats to great and ferocious bears, as large as the bulls of France, or so they seemed. We had need of furs, to make ourselves clothing, fitted to that cold clime, and to lie on and to cover us when we slept.

One day I shot three bears myself. On another day, De Pont Brian killed two. These bears all looked to us

to be twice the size of those we have at home, mayhap partly because we killed them ourselves, and are much more ferocious and dangerous to their hunters. Many savages are killed or badly hurt by them each winter, when they are hunted most, because their fur is then at its best. But the bears here know naught of guns and it is easy to come near them before shooting, making their hunting less dangerous.

Only once was I in great peril; and that was when I came suddenly upon a monster she-bear and her two small cubs. She was lying, with her cubs, in a sort of den made alongside a huge log. The log lay in my path and I was forced to climb over it. The result was that I actually jumped down on top of the mother bear, before I knew that she was there; and then I went tumbling on top of her two cubs, my gun flying from my hands. My, what a crying those two cubs did make!

As for their mother, she was wild with rage. Her hair stood out straight and stiff all over her body, making her look a hideous monster. At sight of me, she reared herself up on her hind legs and came lurching and plunging straight toward me, growling horribly.

As for myself, I do not think there has ever been a more startled and frightened lad in the world than I was. The bear looked, to my eyes, at least as big as an elephant and every white tooth in her wide-opened red mouth seemed at least a foot long.

Truly, I thought my time had come, when she plunged toward me!

But the good saints, bless them! were with me.

For, as I struggled to get upon my feet, my right hand touched something cold and hard. It was the barrel of my gun! In an instant I had seized hold of the gun and, rolling over on my back, had thrust its butt against

my shoulder and fired, even as the monster thrust down great hairy arms to seize me. The gun was heavily loaded with ball and the discharge, so close that the muzzle almost touched her, nearly blew the head off the bear. She fell on top of me, crushing the breath out of my body and covering me with blood, so that, when De Pont Brian and Goliath, greatly frightened, came running up, they thought the bear had killed me. Howbeit, the blood was all bear-blood and I, as soon as I got the breath going inside of me again, was all right and had not a hurt on me anywhere. The cubs had vanished and we had not another sight of the two funny balls of fur.

Aye, those hunting-days were delightsome days for De Pont Brian and me and brought us many a fine thrill.

These savages at Stadacona have a most curious custom or habit. In the summer time they grow a certain kind of herb, whereof they lay by a great store and prepare and use it after the following curious manner. First they cause this herb to be dried in the sun. Then they place it, together with a hollow piece of stone or wood, fashioned like a pipe, into a small bag, made from the skin of a little beast, which they wear about their necks; and, when they wish to make use of the herb, they crush it into a powder on the hollows of their hands and put it into one of the ends of the pipe and, laying a coal of fire on it, they thrust the other end of the pipe into their mouths. Now they do suck on the pipe so long that they fill their bodies so full of smoke that it doth come out of their mouths and nostrils, even as out of the tunnel of a chimney. This they say doth keep them warm within and in health. They never go without some of it about them; but they do not allow

their women folks to smoke, saying it is only for the use of warriors and men.[1]

This I thought a most strange thing and was curious to try it myself and I finally prevailed on De Pont Brian and Goliath to try it with me. The smoke, at first, felt as hot as pepper on my tongue. Then, after a time, I saw a curious look come on the face of Goliath. He took the pipe out of his mouth and looked at it and groaned. I laughed at him; but hardly was the laugh out of my mouth, when a great sickness came into my stomach. I took the pipe out of my mouth and looked at it. De Pont Brian saw the look on our faces and laughed and wanted to know what ailed us; but, suddenly his words and his laugh stopped in his mouth, his pipe dropped from betwixt his lips and he caught hold of his stomach with both hands and doubled up like a half-closed pocket-knife. A moment later we were all three holding on our bellies and calling on the saints for help.

Thus it was that Captain Cartier found us. He wanted to know what was the matter. We told him that we thought we were dying. He caught sight of the pipes.

"I have tried the savage smoke myself," he said and laughed. "It doesn't seem to like a white man's stomach, does it? But, the unease will not last long," and, laughing and chuckling to himself, he hurried on his way, which I then thought showed a great heartlessness in him.

I do not think that this habit of the savages, which they call smoking, will ever become popular among white folk.

[1] This is the first description of the use of tobacco by Indians along the shores of the St. Lawrence River. The account is taken direct, with a few slight changes, from Hakluyt's translation of Cartier's Second Voyage, 1535-1536.—E. M.

Thus passed a month or two. I know not exactly how long a time. I kept no reckoning. Then came a great snow-storm, which covered the ground to a depth of nearly five feet on the level and kept us all penned up in our ships or in the fortification on the shore; and, following the snow, came a great coldness, which seemed to freeze the very marrow in our bones, did we but venture far from the heat of a fire. In going only from our ship to the fortification on the shore, which was not far, both De Pont Brian and I froze the ends of our noses and our ears. I did not think that so great a cold and such quantities of snow existed anywhere.

Then in December a great horror came upon us. First we heard that a most malignant sickness had come among the savages at Stadacona and that already above fifty of them were dead of it. Thereupon Captain Cartier gave strict orders that no more savages be suffered to come near our fort, or our ships, or us. But, albeit we kept them from us, the sickness soon began to spread itself among us, after a most incredible and horrible manner.

I do not care to write down the horrors of that dreadful pestilence.[1] They were too terrible even to recall. But, so long as I live, I shall never forget that dreadful winter. Soon the sick outnumbered the living. We, who were well, had to care for those who were ill night and day. And the dead! The ground was frozen solid, hard as flint. We could not dig graves in it; and, unable to bury our dead in the earth, we hid them from our sight in deep snow-drifts. As the slow-moving days went by,

[1] This was that dread disease now known as scurvy. Readers of my book, *For the Glory of France*, will remember that Captain Champlain, when he founded Quebec, spent the winter here and suffered from the scurvy in the same dreadful manner. Truly, as Yuon says, "it was a most dreadful pestilence."—E. M.

the horrors of this most dreadful plague increased. There seemed no way of stopping it. Even Captain Cartier grew desperate. We appealed to the blessed saints, to the Holy Virgin. In vain. The number of the sick increased. The number of the dead grew. Already there were fifteen dead and more than seventy-five sick and nigh unto death, as we thought. Still the sickness waxed and the deaths increased, until of the one hundred and ten men that we had, there were not above four or five who were sound and well enow even to care for the ill. We prayed unceasingly to God to have compassion on our miseries. But God, in this cold heathen land, seemed afar off from us. Thus, one terrible day after another, slowly passed that dreadful winter. April came. The sickness still waxed stronger. Five and twenty of our best and chiefest men were already dead of it. Only Captain Cartier and De Pont Brian and I had not had a touch of the evil thing; and there were some few others on whom it did not seem able to get a firm hold.

Then, when all hope had gone from out our hearts and there were few of us who thought to see the fair and sunny lands of France again, the miracle happened. I shall always believe it to have been a miracle, believe that, at last, the good God, taking compassion on our miseries and giving heed to our unceasing prayers and supplications, did send us miraculous succor. This is how it happened.

One day our captain, who labored unceasingly to relieve our suffering and grieved continually over our miseries, albeit he always wore a cheerful countenance before our eyes and had good and hopeful words for our ears, called De Pont Brian and me to go with him without the fort for a walk in the warm sunshine on the ice of the river. Hardly had we come on the ice, when

we saw a number of savages coming from Stadacona and likewise walking on the ice toward us. When they came nearer, we saw that one of them was Domagaia. At sight of him we were greatly astounded; for, not twelve days agone, we had seen him pass the fort, seemingly death-stricken with this terrible disease. His knees were swollen to the bigness of a child two years old, all his sinews were shrunken together, his gums rotting and his teeth falling out. We never thought to see him alive again; yet now we beheld him well and sound! Whereat Captain Cartier was marvelously glad; for he hoped that Domagaia would tell him how he had healed himself; and that, having this knowledge, he, in turn, might give help to his men and restore them to health. Accordingly, when the savages came near, he asked Domagaia how it was that he, who was desperately sick not twelve days agone, was now well and sound.

The savage told him that he had taken the juice and the sap of the leaves of a certain tree and therewith healed himself. Our captain asked him if there were any of this kind of trees growing thereabouts, telling him that he had a servant who had been to Canada and there had been stricken with the disease. This he did in order not to have him think that he had need of the cure for his own men; for he did not wish the savages to know how fearfully the disease had stricken us.

Domagaia at once bade two women go and bring him some of it. They soon returned with ten or twelve branches of that wonder-tree. Thereupon Domagaia gave the branches to Captain Cartier and told him to take their bark and leaves and boil them together. Then that he should give the sick man this decoction to drink every other day and wash his legs with the dregs of it. He also said that this tree had the virtue to heal all

other diseases of whatsoever kind; but, as to the truth of this, I have no certain knowledge. They call the tree in their language Ameda or Hanneda.[1]

This knowledge gave us the greatest possible joy, but we did not show our gladness to the savages and walked quite slowly and without any appearance of excitement back to the fort; for we did not want them to know how dreadfully afflicted with the sickness we were, being fearful that, knowing our weakness on account of the number of our sick, they might seek to kill us and take possession of our ships and goods. But, once we were in the fort, Captain Cartier made all possible haste to prepare the decoction.

At first the men would not drink of it, thinking it might be a poison sent to kill them by the savages, who thus could come easily and without hurt to themselves into the possession of the rich booty of our ships and goods. But, presently, some of them who appeared nigh to their deaths, seeing no other hope for themselves, did drink of it.

Then, when the others saw how wonderfully the liquid wrought on those who drank it, there was so great strife as to who should partake of it first, that they were like to kill one another in their eagerness to get some of the decoction down into their bellies, whence it could act and drive the fearful disease from their bodies. Truly, so marvelously did this medicine work, that, within a week's time, by the grace of God, we were well rid of our fears of this most dreadful pestilence and soon all had recovered their health. Aye, I shall always believe this marvel a miracle of God, performed in our behalf.

[1] The tree is thought to have been the white spruce or white pine.—E. M.

Now, when all of us who were left from the pestilence, were well and sound again and the warming sun and the winds of approaching summer had thawed the deep snow from off the ground and were gnawing at the ice in the river, all our thoughts began to turn joyfully to our homeward journey, to getting ourselves back to France as quickly as possible; but we had to await the clearing of the ice out of the great river.

In the meantime, the savages had also recovered from the pestilence and were now allowed to visit us again and were entertained by our captain in as friendly a manner as could be, all but Lord Donnacona and Taignoagny, who held themselves aloof sullenly and appeared to be plotting evil against us. Then our captain, perceiving that great numbers of savage men were gathering on the shores round about our ships and fort and not knowing what evil they might do, determined to act and, as it were, take opportunity by the forelock. Accordingly he so managed matters that Lord Donnacona, Taignoagny, Domagaia and two other of their chiefest men were made prisoners and brought on board his ship, to the great consternation and fear of the surrounding savages, who at this, all fled afar from us.

Captain Cartier then sent word to them that he would hold their lord and the others, as hostages for their good behavior; and would take them back with him to France to show them to his king. He also promised that he would bring their Lord and the others back to them the next year, assuring them that, in the meantime, they would be treated in all kindness. This he promised them to do, if they made no hostile movements against him and his men; but, if they did, he vowed that he would hang their Lord and the other hostages all to the yardarms of his ships, where they might be seen of all men,

hanging like apples from a tree. This he did in order to secure the safety of his men and ships.

The savages, fearing for their Lord and the men with him, gave us no further trouble; but came frequently, while we yet remained at the Port of the Holy Cross, to talk with their Lord from the shore; and, hearing from his own lips, how well and kindly all of them were treated and that all would come back to them next year, with marvelous tales to tell of the wonders they had seen, they were well content.

One evening, a few days after the happenings just related, came a report to Captain Cartier that all the ice had been swept from out the river below us, save for small pieces which came drifting down with the current, and that now it would be safe for us to start on our homeward voyage. What a shout went forth from all of us when, some five minutes later, our captain, standing under the Great Deck Lanthorn, whither he had summoned us, told us that the river had broken its shackles of ice and was free again and that, since all was in readiness, we would start on our homeward voyage with the rising of to-morrow's sun. I do not think that those wild and lonely rocks and great forests ever heard before as joyful a shouting, as that which we then sent echoing through this lonely wilderness of the New World.

That night there was great rejoicing and feasting on board all of our ships; for, by now, the thought of home and France had taken possession of all of us and we were most eager to be on our way. I think that every one of us dreamt of home, when we went to sleep, dreamt of those we loved, of how joyously they would greet us, of how they would smile and marvel at the wondrous tales we would tell them of the far-off New

World. I know that I did, when sleep, at length, closed my eyes.

The next morning I did not awake until I heard a loud rapping on the door and the great voice of Goliath calling:

"Up with you, young lazybones! Know you not that this be the day we start back for St. Malo and home? Home! Saints love me! but never did I think I would be so glad to see the ugly old walls of St. Malo again! Now, out with you, you two lazybones!" and we heard his heavy footsteps going from our door.

We were out of our bunks and into our clothes and on the deck in three minutes. We had overslept and everything was in readiness for our immediate departure. It was a bright spring morning. The New World looked very fresh and very beautiful in the warm light of the just-risen sun. The shores of the river were lined with savages. The river near our ships was covered with savages in their boats. At the very moment we came hurrying up on deck, Captain Cartier, standing very straight, his eyes shining, gave the order to up with anchors and the sails—and we were off!

The savages shouted and danced; our cannon roared a farewell; and, very slowly at first, our ships began to move down the great river; but soon, catching both a favoring wind and current, we increased our speed, until we had left the boats of the savages behind us and the great bluffs at Stadacona began to show dim in the distance.

That was the last we ever saw of this savage town and its wild people. But never shall I forget the horrors of the dreadful winter we passed there; and, even in the very midst of the joy of our going, there came a sadness into the hearts of all of us at the thought of those

we were leaving behind in this far-off lonely wilderness of the New World, who never more will see home nor native land. When the last sight of the great bluff passed from our eyes, we all stood with uncovered heads, as Captain Cartier lifted his eyes skyward.

"God have mercy on their souls!" he said. "God give rest to their bones! God and the saints bring comfort to those who await, in vain, their return! Amen!" and he bowed his head, we all bowed our heads, in a silent prayer for the dead, we had left behind in this far-off lonely wilderness who will never more see home nor native land.

Now, there is no need of my telling in detail of our voyage down the great river to the ocean, save that we all made it joyfully, with the glad thought singing in our hearts that each day's setting sun brought us one day nearer to France, to St. Malo, to home and to our loved ones. The men now sang at their work. I even caught Goliath attempting to sing, as he sat on a great coil of rope fashioning one of his long arrows; but I did not like the sounds he made and threatened to throw him overboard, if he did not cease to give vent to the horrible rumbling, grumbling roar inside of him. The big fellow looked up at me, grinned widely and bade me try it, sobeit I wished a drink of water, and returned to his singing, making even a louder noise than before. I covered my ears with both hands and fled to another part of the ship.

We had little trouble returning down the great river, going, as we did, with the current. We made few stops; for Captain Cartier was most anxious to get back to France and lay his discoveries before the King.

"'Tis a land many times larger than France that I am bringing him," he said, "albeit now a land of savage

men and beasts; yet it is a most fertile land and can be made, in God's good time, to blossom like the rose, as did the desert of old. 'Tis a mighty empire, with a great river, running from the ocean, up into its very midst, that I lay at the feet of my King. Besides, have I not made other important discoveries? Harbors? Capes? Sounds? Islands? Bays? Rivers? all pointing to yet greater discoveries to come, sobeit the King will but give me further aid and encouragement. Aye, Yuon, De Pont Brian, we have done great service for our King and Country, greater than we yet know; for we have pointed the way to the upbuilding of a new and mightier France in the fertile wildernesses of this New World. 'Twill certainly come, in the fullness of time; but I shall not live to see it. That be ever an explorer's disappointment. He must take the greatness of his discoveries in trust and await the richest of his rewards—in his grave! But, what am I doing? Glooming? And with so many and so great discoveries in my hand to lay at the foot of the throne of my King and so marvelous a tale on my tongue to tell into his ears! 'Tis reward enow for any man!" That far-away look came on his face, as he turned from us and went to the prow of the ship and there stood looking ahead at the flood of the waters of that noble river rolling down to the ocean from out the great country which he was bearing to his King. Aye, the honor and the glory of it were enow for any man!

CHAPTER XXXI

A MESSAGE FROM HOME

ON and on we sailed, the wind and the weather favoring us for the greater part of the time, until we entered the great bay made by this mighty river. On and on, until our ships were once again fairly on the ocean and skirting the coasts of Newfoundland, that great island, before and around which lie those wide banks, where the fish do gather in such multitudes that it be like scooping up gravel from a pit to load a ship with them in truth, but the work of a few hours.

Here we found many fishing boats from France and Brittany and among them were some from St. Malo. But, to my great disappointment, they could give me no news whatsoever of my father and sister, of whom not one of them appeared ever to have heard. Sailor folk be queer folk and take little interest in land matters or folk; and seldom know aught of the happenings in their own town, save when they concern their own families. But they did show the greatest possible interest in the tale of our adventures and explorations and kept us up to a late hour each night, telling of what we had done and seen.

Captain Cartier would have staid here a few days longer, so pleasant was it for all of us to meet these sailors from France, had it not been for what happened on the night of the fourth day. I do not think I shall ever forget that night, nor the agony of the great anxiety it brought me.

Captain Cartier entertained some of the captains of

the fishing boats from St. Malo in his own cabin. Never before had I heard such interesting tales of the ocean and of the cities and towns of far-off coasts, as these old sea-dogs told, after their stomachs had been well filled with comforting foods and warming drinks. De Pont Brian and I listened almost with bated breaths. It must have been nearing the hour of two in the morning, when our guests departed. We accompanied them to the bulwarks, whence they climbed down into their boats and had just said our adieus and heard their oars slapping the water as they rowed away, when there came a call from the darkness below us, for it was a black night.

"Ship, ahoy!" called a gruff voice.

Captain Cartier answered.

"Be this Captain Jacques Cartier's ship come back from his explorations?" again called the gruff voice.

"Aye, aye, it be and it be Captain Cartier himself who speaks. Now, what would you have of him at this late hour of a dark night?"

"I would come quickly on board, for I bear a most urgent message to the son of the Chevalier Lauren de Valour, that I was bidden to deliver into no other hands but his own. He should be with Captain Jacques Cartier, who——"

"Here! Here, I be!" I shouted in the great excitement that came suddenly upon me at these unexpected words.

In another moment, we had the man on board. He was middle-aged and gray haired, a sturdy old sea-dog, who looked as if he might have got his sea-legs with the cutting of his teeth.

"The message! Give me the message! I be Yuon, son of the Chevalier Lauren de Valour." I cried, the instant he set feet on deck.

The old seaman eyed me by the light of our lanthorns for a moment, then thrust a hand under the bosom of his sea-worn blouse and drew out a small packet, carefully wrapped in oilskin. Then he coolly turned from me to Captain Cartier, greeted him as an old friend and glanced again toward me.

"Be that Yuon, son of the Chevalier Lauren de Valour of St. Malo?" he asked. "I was to be uncommon cautious to make certain that I placed this packet in no hands but his own."

"Aye," answered Captain Cartier, "of a certainty, this be Yuon, son of the Chevalier Lauren de Valour of St. Malo. I swear it. Give him the packet."

"I'll be right glad to be rid of it," he said and heaved a great sigh. "I came from the banks to the north not an hour agone and was told that Captain Cartier was here, back from his explorations in the New World. Then I bethought me of the little maid, with the blackest and most bewitching eyes I ever saw in head of girl, who came alone on board my ship in the harbor of St. Malo, at the very moment we hoisted sail to be off for the fishing banks of the New World, and gave me this packet and implored me, if the chance should offer itself, to deliver it into the very hands of her brother, who had gone exploring to the New World with Captain Cartier. She said that the blessed saints, of a certainty, would bring us together, even in this far-off region of ice and snow, for her need was great—and I verily believe that they did! God bless her! She was a brave sweet maid! One look from those black eyes, wet with tears, made me rejoice to do her a service. I know no more, save that, judging from her looks and actions, the message must be most urgent; for the maid was all of a-tremble and looked as if she had a sore trouble and

a great fright hidden in the small heart of her. That be all," and he handed me the packet, bowed and, with an old sailor's abruptness, was gone over the side of the ship down to his boat and I heard him rowing away. Then I recovered sufficiently from the excitement his startling appearance and message from out the black night had thrown me into, to remember my manners and leaped to the side of the railing and called down my thanks into the blackness below.

"Aye, aye, lad," came back the answer. "She be a most brave and sweet maid and I served her gladly. Now make you haste to do her bidding, whatsoever it may be; for, of a certainty, the very saints do favor her, or never would I have found you in this wild waste of unknown waters. Adieus!" and I heard him rowing rapidly away.

"Come, Yuon," and Captain Cartier laid a hand on my shoulder, for I was all a-tremble with the excitement the coming of that unexpected packet had wrought in me. "Come with me to my cabin and come you also, De Pont Brian and Goliath."

Even in the stress of that moment, I noted, as we hurried away, the startled, questioning look that flashed into the eyes of Louis du Val, who stood near us with others of the young noblemen, and I saw him make his adieus and go quickly from them. I wondered then what that look might mean; but, before we had come to Captain Cartier's cabin, all thought of it had been swallowed up by the tensity of my interest in this most urgent message from my sister that had come to me in so wondrous a manner.

The instant the door closed behind us, I began tearing off the oilskin.

"Wait a bit, Yuon," said Captain Cartier, "until I

make sure we be safe from all lookers and listeners-in," and he went swiftly to the three windows of the room and made sure that their curtains were down in such manner as to shut out the sight of all peering eyes. He even covered over the keyhole in the door, by hanging his hat on its projecting key.

"Now, gather you close around my table in the center of the room and speak so low that no listening ears can hear you at door or windows." He said and seated himself at the table on which burned a single candle and motioned all to sit down and me to sit close by the candle. "Open the packet, Yuon," he commanded, when this had been done, his eyes glowing with interest.

I tore off the oilskin, then a thick wrapping of cloth and held in my hand a folded piece of parchment, with words written on it that I could see, at the first sight, were in the handwriting of my sister.

"Read, but in a low tone of voice," cautioned Captain Cartier.

Then I read the following words, all writ down in my sister's handwriting.

Dearest Brother:

When you get this message, come home to us at once. We have sore need of you. I dare not write down plainly what that need is, lest other eyes than yours should read this message. Come quickly. Our need is pressing. Your father lies, grievously wounded and helpless, in his bed at home; and I, a weak unexperienced maiden, know not what to do, where to turn; for our enemies be wicked and powerful and threaten, now that my father lies helpless, that which they would not dare, were he on his feet, with his sword in his hand.

I write in great haste; for the ship this letter must go

on lies in the harbor, even now making ready to depart for the New World. I write unbeknown to my father and against his command. The first time I have disobeyed him in my life; but my need is so great and my helplessness against the mighty so manifest, that I know the good God will pardon me. Also, even my father knows not the greatness of my need, knows not the cruel, detested fate that is threatening me. If you love me, Yuon, come with all speed, lest the evil deed be done and you come too late——

I dare not wait longer—The ship might sail at any moment! I have confided my troubles to the Holy Virgin, to the blessed saints; and I know they will help me and so guide this message that it will come into your hands, though you be in the outermost parts of the earth——

God help you! The saints bless you, my dear, dear brother! I——"

Martin, who is to row me to the ship, calls for me to make haste——

Kisses—Love——

Your loving little sister, Mignon.

I dropped the missive down on the table and buried my face in my arms. My father, grievously wounded and lying helpless in bed, mayhap, nigh unto death, yet threatened by a powerful and wicked enemy! My pretty, little, motherless sister, whom we had always guarded with such tender care, beset by cruel and threatening enemies, not knowing what to do nor where to turn for help! And the wide and stormy Atlantic Ocean betwixt them and me! Was ever a son and brother in greater trouble? I felt a hand laid on my shoulder.

"Yuon," said the voice of Captain Cartier. "Yuon,

take courage. We sail early in the morning for France, for France, Yuon! I——"

A startled look came on his face; and, with the quickness of a much younger man, he leaped to the door, unlocked it, flung it open and darted out, with De Pont Brian, Goliath and I close behind him. We had all heard it, the creaking of a board outside one of the cabin windows, where no board should be creaking at that time of night.

But, all the ship was black with night. We could not see six feet before us. Whoever had caused the creaking of that board had fled too soon and too fast for us even to catch a glimpse of him. Only we heard, in a distant part of the ship, the fall of a heavy body, as if a rapidly moving man had stumbled over something and had fallen to the deck. But, when we raced to the spot, whence the sound had come, we found nothing suspicious there, save an overturned water-pail, which had been carelessly left on deck.

" 'Tis useless to search longer in this darkness," declared Captain Cartier; "but I am sure someone was listening at that window. Ah, if we could but have caught him!" and his jaws clamped together. "Now, get to your bunks and get all the sleep you can before dawn, when we sail for France. Yuon, I know the great anxiety you must feel," and he paused for a moment at my side, "and I promise to get you back to France as quickly as ship can. Now, go to your bunk, lad, and try to get some sleep."

"My sword, my life, is at your service, Yuon!" exclaimed De Pont Brian, the moment we were in our cabin as he laid an arm affectionately about my shoulders. "I have influence with the King and my father has more than I. Both will be at your service. So be of

good cheer, my friend. Now, what we both need, is sleep; for, early in the morning, we start for France."

"But, already, it has been so long, will still be long, before I can get to my father and sister, my poor little sister! my pretty Mignon! And so many things might happen, might already have happened—Claude, Claude! help me to endure, without shame to my manhood, the long waiting, the soul-rending suspense, until I get back to France; for I see not how I can endure it without help. My poor little——"

"There, there, Yuon," and his arm went about me. "All that I can do, you must know that I will do gladly. Now, to sleep and rest; for, in the morning, we sail for France, for home and your father and sister, Yuon! In the morning's light, all will look different. Good-night," and, to my surprise, for De Pont Brian was not demonstrative, he threw his arms about me and kissed my cheek.

Strange, but that kiss seemed to cheer and comfort me wonderfully; so that, even before sleep closed the world to me, hope that I would yet get back to France in time was gladdening my heart.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE EVIL THREE AT LAST

IN the morning there was no delay. With the coming of the first rays of the rising sun, we were off, all, with glad hearts at our going, and I, with hope again singing to me, even as De Pont Brian had said.

Youth! How glorious it is to be young! when, always, we look for the best in all happenings and troubles do not sink overdeeply into our hearts! Not but what that matter of my father and sister still troubled me and greatly; but the hope of getting back to them before the crisis came tempered it and cheered me on and drove despair from me. It did not seem possible that the good God and the blessed saints, could have had that letter delivered to me in such a miraculous manner—all to no purpose!

I read the letter again and again, trying to fathom what the trouble my sister wrote of might be. I thought of the words of my father, hinting at some hidden peril, some misfortune that threatened him. I thought it meant money matters; for I knew that he was poor and growing poorer each year. Mayhap, he had borrowed money on his estate, was in danger of losing it, of losing the home of our ancestors for centuries! If so, and my heart bounded at the thought, had I not a cure for that evil in the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the Aztec jewels? I must now see that they were safeguarded more carefully than ever.

But what could my sister mean by "the cruel and de-

tested fate" that threatened her? She so young and innocent! That troubled me most. I could not solve it, nor could De Pont Brian, nor even Captain Cartier, help me.

"It might be some love affair," was the best Captain Cartier could do.

"Mayhap, she be threatened with marriage to one, when her heart has gone to another," was the suggestion of the more romantic De Pont Brian.

Love affair! Marriage! My little sister, Mignon! No, that could not be! She was yet but a child!

Another matter troubled me. What of the De Bocharts, the old Count and the young Count? Did they still thirst for my blood? My sister wrote naught of this, probably knew naught of it; for my father would be sure to keep the peril I was in from her. Doubtless, if she had known, she would not have written me, as she did. I saw plainly that I must move cautiously, when I came back to St. Malo, until I had learned how this matter stood; for, dead, I would be helpless to aid either my father or my sister—and I had no liking for death!

Du Val, for some reason, had now quit visiting our ship, save when he was especially invited, not even did he come when we had our swording-exercise, which we still held daily, in order to keep the young noblemen, who had little to do, in good physical condition and free from the megrims. But, when he did come on board, or when I saw him in other places, he was still as genial and pleasant as could possibly be, especially with De Pont Brian and me. But there sometimes came a look on his face that I liked not, a preoccupied, anxious look, as if a big trouble was stirring inside of him. Mayhap, it might be, I thought, that he had left France under cir-

cumstances similar to my own, had fled for his life, and now had cause to fear trouble on his return. But, back and behind all this, I seemed to sense evil. I know not how to explain it; but, when his teeth showed whitely in that lip-curling smile of his, I always thought of a treacherous dog I once had that had a grin for every bite. Nathless, I had no thought—There I go again faster than my story and must slow down!

Now, as you must know, sailing on a ship on the wide ocean is a monotonous thing, one day being much like another, save for changes in the weather; and on our voyages back to France the wind and the weather both favored us.

"Of a surety, Yuon," Captain Cartier said to me more than once, "the saints do favor us on this voyage, even as your sister prayed them to do; for never have I been on a voyage, when the good God gave more favoring winds, nor when my ship went swifter to its port. It augurs well for you, Yuon; for, in very truth, I believe the good saints have come to the aid of your sister and father and will bring you back to St. Malo in time. So, be of good cheer, lad!"

This he said reverently; for the very evident manifestation of the favor of the saints had somewhat awed him.

But, now that we were nearing the coast of France, the tensity of my suspense, of my anxiety, increased. Every night I dreamt of my father and my sister. All day I thought of them. Every time De Pont Brian and I were both absent from our cabin at the same time, even if but for a few minutes, I rushed to my bunk-post on my return, to make certain the Casket of Quetzalcoatl was still there; for now it might be that the Casket and the Aztec jewels would be the means of saving both my

father and sister and, possibly, our estate. But, so far as we could see, the Evil Three made no move. The casket and the jewels remained undisturbed. This troubled us. Had they discovered their hiding-places? Were they now awaiting but for us to get near the shore, before taking the jewels, so that they could escape with them from the ship? Was this why they were so quiet? If so, then they had not long to wait now.

"In two days more, God prospering us! we sail into the harbor of St. Malo," Captain Cartier said that very morning to De Pont Brian, Goliath and me. "Be doubly on your guard; for I fear me greatly that the Evil Three have found the hiding-places of the jewels and that now they but abide their time."

How his words thrilled through me! Home in two days! Father! Sister! Then to their rescue! I think every nerve in my body jumped at the thought.

But, alas! much can happen in two days!

About noon that day, when we were standing with Captain Cartier on the fore-deck, a sudden turmoil of angry voices came bellowing up to our ears from below where the sailors were quartered, followed by sounds of blows and violent strugglings. At first we thought it but an ordinary fight among the seamen, for sailors be rough with words and rough words often lead to rougher blows, and we gave the matter little attention. But the sounds of the struggle growing louder, Captain Cartier became impatient of it and ordered De Pont Brian and me to go below and quiet them.

The room, wherein we found the disturbance, was narrow, long and low, with little daylight coming into it from without. Down the center of the room ran a long rudely built table. Two lighted lanthorns swung from the middle of the ceiling. The air was heavy with the

fumes of liquor and thick with the dust stirred up by the struggling men.

At first, coming from the light of day, we could see little; but, soon things in the room began to take form in our eyes and we saw that the long table had been shoved against one side of the room and that two men were fighting furiously in the space thus provided, while, mayhap, a dozen excited, yelling cursing seamen, crowded on top of the table and under it, watched them with the ravening eyes of wolves. In the dim light of that dust-filled room, with those twisted faces and glaring eyes glowering redly in the light of the lanthorns, it looked to me as if we had entered suddenly into a corner of that inferno the priests tell us of, so dreadful was the scene now presented to my eyes.

At first sight I saw that one of the fighting men was Louys Douayren, he who had captured the young savage on Bacchus Island and had accused him of shooting that long arrow at me, an evil-minded, quarrelsome fellow, especially when he had liquor in him, as he evidently had now. I do not remember the name of the other fighter. He was a squat, broad-shouldered, long-armed, brutelike man, with a flat nose and a knife-scar across his face that had left one side of his mouth twisted into a wolflike snarl and exposed a long and ugly tusklike tooth. The men called him Wolf-tooth.

At the moment we entered I saw that Douayren was getting the worst of the fight; saw that Wolf-tooth had him by the throat with his right hand and was keeping the breath from going in or coming out of him; saw that Douayren's right hand, in desperation, had gone to the haft of the big knife in his belt, had jerked it out, had swung it back for the blow——

"Hold!" I yelled, leaped toward the two fighting

men and, with a fortunate thrust of my sword, struck the blade of the knife aside at the instant it was about to enter Wolf-tooth's throat. So near did it come to being his death, that, as it slipped along the side of his face, it sliced off the half of his left ear.

Wolf-tooth's clutching hand dropped from the throat it held and the man staggered back and stared at Douayren, with eyes big and round with the horror of near death.

Douayren whirled on me, knife uplifted, red face flaming with passion—and stopped; for he saw that the point of De Pont Brian's sword, as well as my own, menaced him.

"You—you," he hesitated for a fitting word. Then I saw a look of triumphant rage come into his eyes and an evil grin spread over his face. For the moment judgment had yielded to passion.

"Ah-ha! I don't need to drive my knife into your body to get my revenge!" He chuckled and grinned knowingly. "I—" A startled, frightened look came on his face and his jaws clamped together like a sprung steel trap. "Beg—beg pardon, Chevalier de Valour," he stammered, "but I be half-drunk and know not what I say," and one hand went up to his forehead in a respectful, if somewhat belated, salute. "I be half-drunk and know not what I say," he repeated. "I—I'll climb into my bunk and sleep it off," and he began edging fearfully from me toward the bunks.

It was at this moment I caught sight of something that caused me to leap quickly forward. In the struggle Douayren's blouse had been torn from his body and now he had on only his shirt and trousers, both badly torn in the fight. What I saw was a glimmer of yellow on a shred of cloth hanging from the belt of the

trousers. In an instant my hand had hold of that shred of cloth, while, at the same time, I gave the man so violent a shove with the elbow of my sword-arm that it sent him tumbling toward the bunks, ripped off the shred of cloth and left it in my hand.

"Aye, get you into your bunk," I ordered sternly; "and see that you make no more disturbance, or I'll have the irons on you." I gave him another push and, as I did so, I thrust the piece of cloth quickly into my pocket. In his half-drunken, excited condition, I am quite certain that he did not know I had torn the piece of cloth, with the glimmer of yellow on it, from his trousers.

That ended the fight.

"I thank you kindly for saving my throat from that knife," Wolf-tooth said, turning to me, the death-horror gone from his eyes. "Another instant and I'd been a dead one. I—I" he stammered, a fearful hesitating look coming on his face. "I—I—odds bones, man, you saved my life! I'll tell you, if I get Douayren's knife in my back for it! I—I——"

His words stopped in his mouth, his eyes stared straight past and back of me, a deadly fear coming into them——

"Need any help to quell the riot," suddenly called out a voice back of me.

I whirled about and there, standing in the frame of the door, which gave entrance to the room, stood Louis du Val, his teeth showing whitely in that evil, lip-curling smile of his and his eyes staring straight by me, staring, I knew, into the fear-stricken eyes of Wolf-tooth, with a look in them as venomous and as deadly as that of the fabled African Basilisk, yet his lips smiled and his voice was cool and undisturbed.

"I saw Captain Cartier on deck," he continued, "and he bade me come down here and see if you two needed any help. These sailor folk, sometimes, turn on one like ravening wolves, when stirred up. Howbeit, I see that you have no need of my help. Art coming on deck, now that you have calmed the storm?"

"Aye," I answered promptly; for many thoughts were jumping confusedly in my head and I wished to get to Captain Cartier and Goliath as quickly as could be possible.

"Come, then," and stepping quickly up to De Pont Brian and me, Du Val linked an arm in the arm of each in a most affectionate manner and hurried us both from the room, at least to me he seemed to hurry us, as if he were anxious, mayhap, to get us away from Wolf-tooth.

The moment we were on deck, Du Val begged us to make his apologies to Captain Cartier; for, he said of a sudden, he had bethought him of a matter that demanded his immediate attention, and, without more ado, he hurried from us, a strained, anxious look on his face.

I thought this sudden haste, on his part, strange, albeit, I was most glad to have him go; for I, too, had a most pressing matter that demanded my immediate attention and I did not want him near me when attending to it.

Captain Cartier and Goliath still stood in a secluded spot on the fore-deck talking together.

"Goliath," I said quickly, the moment we were where they were, "have you that brass button, with the maid's head stamped on it, with you?"

He gave me a quick, startled look, thrust a hand into his pocket and pulled it out, with the brass button on its extended palm. I, at the same time, had thrust a hand into my pocket and now brought out the shred of

cloth, with the bit of yellow metal on it, and laid it down by the side of the button that lay in Goliath's hand.

"Another brass button!" Captain Cartier exclaimed, the instant his eyes rested on the two buttons. "And both as like as two peas! How came you by it, Yuon?"

Then I told them of the fight and of all that had happened down in that sweltering hole; and, at the end of the telling, we looked into each other's faces inquiringly.

"The Evil Three, at last, I verily believe!" declared Captain Cartier. "Du Val? Who would have thought it of him? It irks my very soul to think that he, noble born and bred, should prove the Evil Leader of the Evil Three! But, so it would seem, from his action and the actions of Wolf-tooth and Douayren, who, doubtless, are the other two. I would arrest them at once; but we have no actual proof of their guilt. They have not yet taken the jewels. We have only suspicions, which, in our own minds, may look almost as certain as proof, but which no court at law would recognize. We must await some overt act on their part; but, we'll not have long to wait. The voyage is almost at an end and they must act before that end." He paused and stood for a moment with knitted brows, studying the matter.

"I have it," he continued. "To-morrow night, somewhere around midnight, we should pass near enow to the coast for men in a row boat to reach it in safety, mayhap, even a strong swimmer could make it. That will be the time for them to strike, to get the jewels and make at once for the shore; and, once ashore, they will be safe, for 'tis an enemy country; and then those wondrous jewels would be lost to us forever."

"God forbid!" I broke in fervently, thinking of what

those jewels might mean to my father and sister. "We must prevent that, at any price."

"We will," declared Captain Cartier emphatically, and his face and eyes became hard and stern. "Almost would I doubt the goodness of God, if He suffered such evil to triumph! Now, this is my plan. Listen to it carefully—" And, in low rapid words, he told us what he conceived we had best do to defeat the Evil Three.

We thought his plan as good as it could possibly be, at least none of us could think of a better; and we felt confident that it would enable us to triumph over those evil men.

"Then, you feel quite sure that they will not try to get the jewels until to-morrow night, that we will not need to stay awake to-night to guard them and can sleep in peace?" I asked.

"Yes, they must know that it would be fatal for them to take the jewels, before they are ready to flee with them from the ship. They must realize that we would miss them at once and search every man on the ships, search the ships themselves, as with a fine-toothed comb. Furthermore, I do not think that they have a suspicion that we know they are planning to steal the jewels—that we know they have any knowledge whatever of their existence. So, why should they take them, until they are sure they can get away with them safely? Still, be cautious. Sleep with your pistols under your pillow and your naked swords ready to your hand. Remember, they will kill to get possession of the jewels and act accordingly. Now, for the rest of the day, we will go about our business as usual, so as not to awaken their suspicions."

"But, do you not think we had better place the jewels again in our belts and wear the belts around

our bodies, since the Evil Three must now know where they are hidden? Would they not be safer there?"

"No, I think not. The day is excessively hot and, to conceal them, we would have to wear heavy clothing and that would be quite certain to awaken their suspicions. I am confident the jewels will be safe enow in their hiding-places, until we come near enow to land for the Evil Three to try to escape with them to the shore in a boat. Then we must stop them, dead or alive!"

Thus it was planned; and thus decided.

CHAPTER XXXIII

BOUND AND GAGGED AND THE JEWELS STOLEN

I SAW neither Wolf-tooth nor Douayren again that afternoon. Du Val came on board two or three different times and I never knew him to be more genial or pleasant. He joked with me about the nearness of my home-coming and the black-eyed sweetheart, who, he was sure, would be waiting to welcome me back; and I had sense enow to joke with him. He even arranged for me to give him lessons in swordsmanship, when we were back in St. Malo; for, he told me, that it was his purpose to dwell there with his cousin, Count de Bochart and his family.

"Then, I hope I'll have wit enow to learn from you that marvelous sword-trick," he declared. "Oh, we shall see much of each other, De Valour, once I am settled down in my new home."

Truly, he almost persuaded me that I had misjudged him. But, not at all did he persuade De Pont Brian, who had seen more of life than I had; and Captain Cartier swore, when I told him how pleasant he had been.

I do not think that anyone who has not been in a like situation, can realize the sharpness of my suspense and anxiety, as the slow hours now dragged by. I was a prey to a new fear, a new dread, each moment. I saw my father, my sister, surrounded with perils and calling vainly on me for help. I always came too late to their rescue. I always found a ruined home and a vanished father and sister. In the agonies of this greater anxiety,

I gave little thought to either the old or the young Count de Bochart, or to the dread threat of their presence at St. Malo. I devoutedly hope that I shall never again be called on to pass through such agonies of suspense and fear.

But, unbeknown to us, things were rushing to a climax —and I must rush on with the tale of it.

About nine o'clock that night a thick mass of clouds came down upon us from out the northwest and soon overcast the skies with their blackness, hiding from view a glorious full moon. A little later it began to rain, at first falling in a slow drizzle, which increased in violence, until by ten o'clock a storm was raging, with wind and lightning and thunder and rain falling in sheets. At half-past ten o'clock, Captain Cartier, completely enveloped in a heavy black cloak and dripping rain, came hurriedly to our cabin.

" 'Tis a perfect night for the Evil Three to do their evil work," he said; "and, despite the fact that we are still a long way from land, mayhap, they will make a try for the jewels this night, hoping to get away with them in the darkness and the storm and trusting to the god of luck to bring them all safely to the shore. The prize is great enow to risk life itself. I have come to warn you to keep sharp guard all this stormy night; to open door to no man, unless you recognize his voice; to sit in darkness, with your weapons in your hands; to stay in your cabin every instant of the night; to watch your door and window and to keep your ears open for the first suspicious sound. I can see no way now for the Evil Three to secure the jewels, save by first capturing and binding and gagging us, mayhap by killing us, if we make them trouble. Then the jewels would be at their mercy. How they expect to accomplish this, I know not;

but, evidently, they have it all planned to their satisfaction. Possibly, they think to take us unawares, when we lie asleep on our bunks, not even dreaming that any evil is planned against us and the jewels. So, why should they think to find us on guard. Ah-ha, but we will give them a grim surprise! Now, I must get me back to my cabin. Out with the light!" and he paused, with a hand on the door-latch.

I quickly blew out the light. He swiftly opened the door, glided out into the sleeting rain and vanished into the blackness of the night.

Both De Pont Brian and I sprang to the door and looked into the darkness and rain after him, looked and listened. Captain Cartier had completely vanished. We could not hear a sound of his going, unless the sound as of a stumble, followed by a thud, both quickly swallowed up in the noises of the storm, were of his making.

"What was that?" I asked, at the sounds, a chill striking my heart.

"Mayhap, Captain Cartier stumbled and fell in this inky blackness," De Pont Brian answered; but I knew that a sudden fear had come into his heart as well as into my own.

Then, a moment later, came a flash of lightning and we both saw a dark form moving swiftly along the deck in the direction whence the sounds had come. In another moment, it was gone, with the lightning.

"That was Captain Cartier," whispered De Pont Brian. "He is safe," and I could hear the sigh of relief that came with the words.

"Yes," I replied. "I would know him by the way his great cloak enveloped his body."

The rain still fell in wind-driven sheets and beat against the sides of the ship, with the sounds of millions

of thudding fingers. The wind whipped the wet sails and whistled through the rigging. The yards creaked and the great masts groaned, like monsters in pain.

"Truly, 'tis a night for the doing of some dreadful deed," De Pont Brian said, as we reëntered the room and closed and locked and bolted the door, for, you will remember, we now had bolts on our doors.

"Aye, an ideal night for the Evil Three to do their evil work, as Captain Cartier said," I replied. "Not a wink of sleep must we take this night."

We sat down in our two chairs, with pistols and naked swords in our laps, and waited in the silence and darkness, waited for we knew not what.

Not more than five minutes passed, then, suddenly, there came a sharp catlike scratching on the door, yet we both knew there was no cat on board the ship.

"What can it be?" whispered De Pont Brian, greatly startled, staring at the door.

"I know not," I answered; "but I will soon know."

I stept softly to the door and stood with my hand on its latch, listening. In a moment that mysterious scratching came again, only this time louder and more impatiently. In the darkness I sensed that De Pont Brian stood a little way back of me, his drawn sword in his hand.

"Who is there?" I queried softly and I could feel my voice trembling with anxiety as it left my tongue.

"It be I, Old Joshua," quavered a thin voice. "Open quickly!"

There was no mistaking that voice.

"Open, Yuon. 'Tis surely he," whispered De Pont Brian.

Then cautiously I opened the door a little way and peered out and saw, in the darkness, the dim form of a

man squatted on the floor in front of me; howbeit, all I could really see was a white face surrounded by blackness. But I knew it belonged to that quaint old man, who once before had come to warn Captain Cartier of great peril, knew it by the quavering old voice.

"Let in," the words came impatiently. "I come to warn of evil things," and, thrusting out a hand, he pushed the door open and slipped quickly within, before I could stay him. Then he turned and swiftly closed and locked and bolted the door.

"Light," he ordered. "I be afeared of this darkness."

I quickly struck a light, lit a small candle, placed it on the table and turned wonderingly to the old man.

The one small candle gave but a dim light; but there could be no mistaking the quaint old figure before me, with the thin, deeply lined and wrinkled face, carrying that long thin nose, with the crooked end. Of a certainty, 'twas Old Joshua Coumyn, still dressed completely in black, from the black wig on his head to the black soles of the shoes on his feet.

"I be in mourning," he began, the moment he saw our eyes were on him, "in mourning for my dear wife, Joan, who died nine years and——"

"Forget the mourning for the present," thrust in De Pont Brian impatiently. "Your wife is dead, but we are alive and, in danger, I take it. Now, to the point of your tale and be quick about it."

"I would find my captain," quavered the old man. "The tale be for his ears. Know you aught of my captain? He is not in his cabin! Goliath is not in his cabin! Evil men be abroad this night. Take me quickly to my captain! He be in danger of his very life! They will kill him, if I do not warn him! Take me quickly to my captain!"

I could see a deep anxiety in his old eyes, could hear a great fear in his quavering voice.

Captain Cartier not in his cabin! Goliath not in his cabin! My own heart gave a jump of dread at what this might portend.

"Rest you here," I said to Old Joshua, "while De Pont Brian and I go in search of Captain Cartier and Goliath. Come," and I turned anxiously to De Pont Brian. "We must find out what has become of them. I fear evil——"

I stopped abruptly and stared at the door; for, at that moment, there had come an imperative rapping on its panel, as if a matter of life and death was demanding admittance.

Old Joshua, at the first sound of that rapping and with surprising agility for one so old, sprang under the table.

"Out with the light!" De Pont Brian whispered a bit huskily and I could see that he was drawing his sword, as he stepped to the door. "Come you with me, Yuon."

I blew out the light and stepped quickly to the side of De Pont Brian.

"Who is there?" he demanded and we both bent forward to listen for the answer.

At that instant, to our utmost astoundment, the locked and bolted door was flung so violently open that, swinging inward, it knocked both De Pont Brian and me, half-stunned, to the floor. A light glared into my eyes, a man sprang upon my body, hands swiftly bound my arms and legs, thrust a gag into my mouth and fastened it there. So swiftly had this been done, that, almost before I realized, in my half-stunned condition, what was happening to me, I was helpless and voiceless; and by my side

on the floor, lay De Pont Brian in the same dire condition.

Without a blow struck, we had both been bound and gagged! Never were two young men more astounded, more completely discomfitted. We could not comprehend how it had happened, how it could have happened, with that locked and bolted door betwixt us!

The instant the last knot that bound us had been tied, one of the captors bent down close to our ears.

"Thanks, kindly, for the gift of the priceless Emerald Pyramid and the Aztec jewels," he whispered, his voice trembling with excitement and triumph. "You have been cunning in your deceiving and in their hiding; but I, also, have been cunning. Now, I am off to enjoy the fruits of my honest toil," and, chuckling, he sprang away from us.

I heard him near my bunk, heard the small squeak which the unscrewing of the top of my bunk-post brought forth, heard other hands tearing open De Pont Brian's secret hiding-place, heard a suppressed gasp of astoundment and triumph and knew that the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the Emerald Pyramid had been found. Then, with a rush, the men were out of the room. I heard the door close with a bang and I knew that we were alone, lying bound, gagged and helpless in the darkness and silence of our own cabin.

There had been three men, the Evil Three; but each had worn a black mask and the voice of the one who had whispered had been disguised. I did not recognize one of them; but I had the feeling that I knew all three.

For a moment I was too astounded by this unexpected happening to make a move. Then I heard De Pont Brian struggling desperately at my side to free

himself from his bonds. At the sound, a sudden fierce rage boiled up within me and I strove, with all the powers of my body and limbs, to break the hold of the heavy cords that fettered me. But the hands that had bound us knew their business. Neither of us, strain as we might, could loosen our bonds by the fraction of an inch. Helpless and voiceless we lay—and the thieves were speeding away with the precious jewels, with the marvelous Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the still more marvelous Emerald Pyramid! Despair seized hold on me. There appeared nothing that I, that we, could do. At the very moment, as it were, of approaching safety, all the jewels, the very Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the Emerald Pyramid itself had been stolen from us, as neatly and as easily as if we had been children. Again a great rage surged through me at my helplessness. If I could have given voice to my rage, to my disgust, to my disappointment, it would have helped some! But to lie there as helpless, as useless as a log, when there was so much that needed doing suddenly, that was almost unendurable! But——

"Be them evil men gone? Be you alive? Answer me!" broke in the quavering voice of Old Joshua on my raging thoughts.

My heart gave a great jump. I had completely forgotten that he had hidden under the table and had doubtless been unseen by the Evil Three and that now he was free to come to our aid. 'Twas like seeing a prison door swing open before one's very eyes! In the excitement of the moment, I tried to shout to him to make a light and come quickly and free us; but the gag prevented me from making a sound.

"Be you dead? Both dead? Why don't you answer me? Be you dead?" I could sense a desperate fear and

anxiety in his voice, as I heard him moving stumblingly about near the table.

How slow he seemed!

Then a light flared out. I heard a gasp of horror from Old Joshua. A moment later I saw him bend down over me, felt his hands at the cords that bound me, felt the cords twitch suddenly and then drop away.

I was free!

"Glory be!" I think I shouted, grabbed the knife from Old Joshua's trembling hands and, in another moment, had freed De Pont Brian.

"Come!" I cried. "Get sword and pistols! We must after the thieves at once! There is not a moment to lose!"

"But, Captain Cartier? Goliath? What of them?" cried De Pont Brian.

"They must wait. Whatever has happened to them, has already happened. We must after the thieves, or they'll be overboard and into a boat and lost in the darkness and rain of this stormy night and with them will go those priceless Aztec jewels. Come," and I caught up my sword and pistols, which had fallen to the floor in the struggle, and sprang out into darkness and rain, followed by De Pont Brian.

The wind had gone down, but the rain still fell steadily and the ship was as black as seventeen black cats, save where the Great Lanthorn cast its flickering rays on the deck.

As we ran, we heard a sound, as of someone stumbling, a muttered curse, coming from toward the stern of the ship. A moment later came curses—angry words—blows—the sudden flashes and barks of two pistols—the fall of heavy bodies—a splash in the water——

"Hurry! Hurry!" I shouted; and we leaped toward the sounds.

Near the stern bulwarks of the ship we stumbled over two motionless bodies. At the same instant a vivid flash of lightning showed a man in a small boat rowing desperately from the ship. He caught sight of us and waved his hand triumphantly—but black darkness came before we could recognize him.

I heard a deep breath behind me; but, before I could turn to make sure that it was Goliath, there came another and even more vivid flash of lightning.

The man was standing up in his boat, facing us. I could see that he held the Casket of Quetzalcoatl in his hand. At sight of us, he waved it around his head triumphantly and gave a great shout. He was unmasked. It was Louis Du Val. I could even see his teeth showing whitely in that lip-curling smile of his.

Then there came a short violent grunt from behind me, the twang of a bowstring, the shrill of an arrow; and I saw Du Val suddenly throw up both hands in the air and, with a dreadful scream, plunge sprawlingly over the side of the boat down into the water, a long arrow sticking up out of his breast. As he did so, the Casket of Quetzalcoatl was flung from his hand, made a half circle in the air and splashed down into the water by his side. Then came black darkness and silence, save for the sounds of the falling rain, the creaking of the rigging and the flapping of the wet sails.

I stood for a moment staring blankly out into the blackness of the night, a great sickness in my heart. The Casket of Quetzalcoatl, the wonderful Emerald Pyramid were gone, gone forever! The depths of the ocean had swallowed them beyond all hopes of recovery! But,

mayhap, some of the other jewels were left on the bodies of the two thieves we had stumbled over!

"Light!" I cried and turned to the excited and wondering sailors, who by now had come crowding around us, some with lanthorns in their hands, caught a lanthorn from the hand of one and bent over the two bodies.

"God have mercy on their souls!" Their punishment had been sudden and terrible. Both were dead. A bullet hole in the head of each told how death had come.

Wolf-tooth! Louys Douayren! Du Val! The Evil Three! All were dead! I could but marvel at the swiftness of the justice of God!

As I bent over the two bodies to search for the jewels, a hand was laid on my shoulder.

"Wait. Do not search the dead men, with all these curious eyes staring at you," whispered a voice that caused a rush of gladness to pass through me.

Captain Cartier, then, was safe!

"No need of tempting my bold sailor men with a sight of the Aztec jewels. God grant that they be still on their bodies! I'll order the dead men carried to my cabin, where we'll be out of the rain and have light and secrecy. Then we'll search them."

When we were in Captain Cartier's cabin and he had dismissed all but De Pont Brian and Goliath and me, we at once searched the two dead bodies—and found all the jewels, save the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the Emerald Pyramid. Evidently Du Val had heard us coming and had not dared to wait to get the jewels from the bodies of his two fellow robbers after he had shot them.

"Never mind the loss of the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the wondrous Emerald Pyramid, Yuon," Captain Cartier said, his eyes on the jewels, now spread out on

the table. "There are a great plenty left and to spare to cure all the ills of your father's estate and——"

"But 'twas such a wondrous casket! Such a marvelous Emerald!" I broke in. "I shall never see their like again!"

"Doubtless that be true, Yuon. I misdoubt, if either you or any other man, sees their like again; and, mayhap, it were better so. The possession of so wonderful, so priceless a jewel as the Emerald Pyramid would be sure to bring with it a train of evils. Already, during the short time it has been in your hands, three men have yielded to its malignant influence. Two of them lie there dead on the floor, murdered by their greedy comrade in sin; and he, in turn, has gone, with the Emerald Pyramid, to a nameless grave on the bottom of the ocean. God alone knows how much of evil it has done, how much blood it has caused to flow, in the past! Aye, Yuon, it were better for the jewel to lie there, forever hidden on the bottom of the ocean, than that its glories should continue to bring a distemper of madness into the hearts of men— But," and Captain Cartier gave a sudden start and looked about the room. "Where be Old Joshua? It was he who freed me from the bonds with which the Evil Three had bound me, after they had knocked me down by a violent thrust of the door inward, as I bent to listen. Aye, that was a shrewd trick!— But the door was both locked and bolted! How, then, could they have thrust it open so violently against me? 'Tis a matter that I must look into," and he hurried to the door and began to examine it.

" 'Twas the same evil trick they played on us," cried De Pont Brian, and both of us hurried to the door.

"And on me!" roared Goliath. "Save that they beat me over the head with a club, in addition to the binding

and the gagging," and he rubbed a huge bump on his forehead, already turning black and blue. "Only at a great strain to my muscles, did I break loose. The beasts! I would that they had lived long enow for me to lay hands on them— God pardon me! They be dead, all three dead! God forgive their wicked souls!" and he, too, hurried to the door.

At first we could not discover how they had managed the bolt from the outside. Then, in moving my hands over the outside of the door, my fingers struck a thin flat piece of steel, like the blade of a table knife, protruding from it in the region of the lock. A moment's examination of this and the secret was ours.

They had sawed a thin slit through the door directly back of the bolt, just wide enow for the thin flat bit of steel to move freely back and forth in it for a sufficient distance to shoot and unshoot the bolt. Then they had made an opening in the side of the bolt next to the door to catch and hold the end of the flat bit of steel. Now, all they had to do to bolt or unbolt the door from the outside, was to slip the bit of steel through the slit in the door, catch its end in the opening in the bolt, and slide the bolt back and forth at will. The door itself, as were all the doors on the ship, was so old and seamed with cracks and the slit so narrow and so cunningly concealed, that it would pass unnoticed, or, if noticed, would be thought to be one of the cracks. As for the locks, doubtless, they had made keys for each of them. Our voyage up the river to Hochelaga and back had given them ample time and opportunity to prepare the bolts and make the keys for the three doors.

I thought it all very ingeniously done; and had they not, in their haste, left the bit of steel in the cracklike

slit in Captain Cartier's door, I doubt if we would ever have solved the mystery.

As we turned away from the door, very much pleased with our solution, I noticed a small piece of paper on the floor near the table, from which it had evidently fallen, and I picked it up. It had writing on it and, as it evidently was intended for Captain Cartier, I handed it to him. It was from Old Joshua and read:

> "I be old and fearful and like not the shooting and the killing going on on board this ship. So I go back to the safety of my own ship, now that I have done all that I can for the safety of my captain."

This note set at rest all of the worries of Captain Cartier, concerning the faithful old man, to whom we all owed so much.

Captain Cartier now had the two bodies of the dead robbers removed to the deck, sewn up in sacks, weighted with cannon balls, and thrown overboard, with a brief prayer of mercy for their sinful souls.

CHAPTER XXXIV

I MEET COUNT ROBERT AGAIN—WE FIGHT

THUS had ended all our troubles with the Evil Three; and now my thoughts turned to my near home-coming, to my father and sister, to my sister's letter and what might be its meaning as to the perils which threatened her and my dear father. The nearer I came to St. Malo, the greater became my anxiety, until I had so great an unrest in me that I paced the deck back and forth, pondering every possibility, hoping for the best one moment and fearing every possible evil the next, wondering if the De Bocharts still thirsted for my blood and planning what I would do, if they still did.

Then, on the morning of the next day after the happenings of the events I have just narrated, Captain Cartier came to me where I paced back and forth on the deck and laid a hand affectionately on my shoulder.

"Yuon," he said, "at mid-afternoon this day we should enter the harbor of St. Malo, where I know there be troublesome things awaiting you; and I want you to know that I and others here, especially De Pont Brian, are true and loyal friends to you and will do all that we can to help you and your father and sister, no matter what your trouble may be. I have talked the matter over with De Pont Brian and he has gone even now to gather a little body of skilled and armed men to go with you when you go ashore at St. Malo and guard you whatever may befall; for well I know that

evil man, Count de Bochart, hath a long and unforgiving memory.

"I, myself, will go post-haste to Paris; and so soon as I have made known to the King the greatness of my explorations and discoveries and have presented to him the mighty, though still savage empire I have found for him in the New World, I will take up with the King the matter of your trouble with the De Bocharts and will tell him of the great service you have rendered me and, through me, him. I well know that he will hold you guiltless, for he is both generous and just, and will send an order poste-haste to the De Bocharts to do you and yours no harm, under penalty of his utmost displeasure.

"As for your father's money troubles, if he has them, you have naught to fear. The remaining Aztec jewels are all of the rarest and purest quality and the half of them will sell for more than enow to supply all your possible needs. I never saw their equal for both size and purity. So be of good cheer, Yuon, and go you into St. Malo, fearing naught."

These words of my captain so filled my heart with his and my friends' goodness and kindness, that, for a moment, they overflowed and choked the words in my throat and I could make no reply.

"I understand, Yuon," Captain Cartier said and smiled and hurried away.

About the middle of that afternoon, as Captain Cartier had prophesied, we came in sight of St. Malo. What a shout of gladness we all gave at the first sight of those grim old walls and tall towers and steeples! A moment later came the glad roar of our cannon, answered almost immediately by the cannon at the fort. Soon a multitude of folk in boats put out from the shore

and surrounded our ships, shouting and whooping their joy at our return. 'Twas a glorious home-coming!

As I stood watching the people in these boats, De Pont Brian, who was at my side, suddenly caught me by the arm.

"Look at that long black boat with the swift oarsmen," he said. "A moment ago they came up to the very side of our ship directly opposite to us, paused a moment and I'll vow that that tall man enveloped in the long black cloak, looked up directly at you, then, suddenly, muffled his face in the hood of his cloak, gave a command and the boat whirled about and started for the shore, as swiftly as the muscular arms of the oarsmen could send it. What think you was their purpose, Yuon?"

"Mayhap, naught but curiosity. Who knows?" I answered, too impatient and anxious to get ashore to my father and sister to give the matter any attention at that time. "Have you the men and the boat ready? I have already made my farewells to Captain Cartier."

"Yes. The men and boat await us. Come," and he led me to the side of the ship, where I saw a boat sitting on the water below, with five of the young noblemen, who had sailed with us, fully armed and equipped for battle, in it.

All greeted me with heartening smiles and words. I thanked them and De Pont Brian and I climbed down the rope ladder into the boat and we were off for St. Malo, rowed by strong-armed sailors.

Captain Cartier stood on the prow of his ship and shouted and waved his good-bys and good wishes to us, as we headed for the shore.

I was too excited, too anxious, to remember distinctly what happened now for a time. I know we were greeted

from all sides with shouts of rejoicing, as we rapidly pushed our way through the crowding boats; that once ashore we had difficulty in making our way through the shouting men that surrounded us; that, at last, we won free of the great crowds that lined the shore and filled the streets of St. Malo and came to that little-frequented road, running up to the brow of that small hill, whereon lay the De Valour home.

"Hurry! Hurry!" I cried, as we started up the hill, made more impatient and anxious by every familiar sight I saw. "I like not the pall of silence that hangs over the home of my fathers, where there should be excitement and rejoicing at my home-coming. Follow me as speedily as possible," and I raced up the familiar road.

Presently I came to where the road made that abrupt turn and entered the small opening in the woods, wherein I had fought and sorely wounded the young Count Robert. I had raced half-way across this opening and had come to the side of that flat rock, which makes a pleasant seat under the branches of a great oak tree, when, without sound or warning, six sword-armed and masked men suddenly leaped out of the woods at the side of the flat rock and rushed on me, their naked swords glistening in their hands. At their head came a great-shouldered, tall man, also masked, who seemed full of a most wrathful rage against me.

In one startled bound I leaped upon the top of the flat rock, jerking out my sword, the De Valour Sword, as I did so and shouting: "To the rescue! To the rescue! 'Tis De Valour who calls!" Then my sword struck fire from the blade of the big-shouldered man, who, also, had leaped up on top of the flat rock and had instantly and ferociously set upon me, doubtless hoping to thrust

his sword home before I had recovered from my surprise. But I was handicapped by no surprise and I was fired with a great rage at this cowardly onset of seven men against one, as they thought.

"Now I will surely kill you," hissed my antagonist, as our two swords clashed. "But first I will run my sword through your two cheeks and cut out your boastful tongue. This I will do at the third thrust. Then I will kill you.—One!" His sword leaped directly at my heart.

I swiftly parried it.

"Two!" His blade jumped for my throat.

This thrust I parried also, but with more difficulty.

"THREE!" I saw a sudden flame come into his eyes, as he took a quick step to one side of me and his sword flashed toward my face.

But, I had been waiting for this, and, with a sudden half-twist of my body, my blade leaped out and turned his aside, then slipped through the muscles of his left arm.

At the feel of that sword-thrust, I saw that he knew that he had met his sword-master, saw fear come into his eyes.

"Quick! Thrust him through from behind!" he yelled to his men. "Can you not see I am wounded? Kill him!"

The cowardice of this unchivalrous call for help sent a cold chill of rage through me and drove out all pity. Besides, I must kill him quickly, if I would defend myself from the others, who were now leaping toward me, their swords held ready for the deadly thrusts.

"Have it then!" I growled and thrust with all my strength.

The blade struck true and passed completely through his left breast. I felt the guard thud against his ribs.

He went down like a struck ox, half pulling me with him, my blade sticking in him. I heard a cry of horror come from his men, saw that they were leaping upon the rock behind me, tried to jerk my blade out of its bloody sheath and turn to meet them, but could not. The blade stuck! Then, just as their deadly sword-thrusts started, I flung myself violently to one side and off the rock. As I fell, I heard a great shout and knew that De Pont Brian and the noblemen had come to my rescue.

Of a certainty, it had been a good thought of De Pont Brian to bring those noblemen with him!

When the assassins saw their leader lying dead, with my sword in his breast, not one of them dared to stay to meet the attack of my friends and plunged into the surrounding woods, where all disappeared as if they had magic in their legs.

"Art hurt, Yuon?" De Pont Brian cried and bent anxiously over me.

"Not a scratch!" I cried and leaped to my feet. "Now, I must know of a certainty, who that big man is lying there with a mask hiding his face, as if ashamed to show it by daylight."

I went to the body of the man and jerked the mask off his face. As I thought, it was the young Count de Bochart.

"Let him lie there, till his men pluck sufficient courage from their cowardice to come back after him," I said and drew my sword from his breast.

"Now, I must know what has happened at my home, to my father and sister. Come," and I started on the run up the hill, closely followed by De Pont Brian and the noblemen.

I came in sight of the house. Not a movement of life of any kind showed round about it. I saw not even the

hens, I had hitherto always seen, clucking and scratching in the yard fronting my eyes. The house lay cold and grim before me, like a soulless thing. With a heart nearly bursting with anxiety I raced around to the main entrance in front. Not a sign of a human being was there, save that in front of the great door, slowly pacing back and forth, strode a man-at-arms, one who had no right there. A sudden turn of his body and I saw that he wore the livery of Count de Bochart. My heart flamed at the sight, at what it portended.

"Leave him to me!" cried De Pont Brian, a step behind me. "Go you on, Yuon. We will be close behind you."

I sped up the walk, up the steps to the great door, my naked sword in my hand. The man-at-arms stared stupidly down at me, lowered his long pike across his breast and faced me, still staring stupidly, his mouth open, now staring beyond me at De Pont Brian and the noblemen. I paused not an instant, but leaped and struck at the pike with my sword. The keen blade severed the steel head from the pike and I was at the great door, at the moment the man-at-arms uttered his first shout of warning.

I heard from within the sound of men coming quickly up on their feet, the clash of arms—and the door was flung open. I leaped through it; and faced a half-dozen men-at-arms, their weapons half-drawn, all wearing the livery of De Bochart.

"Leave them to us. Go you on, Yuon," came the voice of De Pont Brian from behind me, and, even at that moment, I heard the sound of joy at the coming battle in it.

The long hall before me was in great confusion. Evi-

dently the men-at-arms had been holding high wassail there. But I saw only what I could see as I ran through it to the grand stairway, leading to the floor above, where were my father's and my sister's rooms. At the head of the stairs stood a man-at-arms, weaponed with a long pike. He gave a great start at the sight of me and the sounds of the battle, now just beginning in the front end of the hall, and lowered his lance threateningly.

I did not look back, did not pause an instant, but leaped up the stairway sword in hand. I think the man must have been confused by the suddenness of our coming, by the impetuosity of my attack, for hardly did he give me a moment's pause. A quick thrust of my sword turned the pike aside, a hard blow on the head, with the flat of my sword, knocked him senseless and I sped on.

My father's room lay at the head of the stairway; and, in one bound I was at the door and had flung it open. The room was large. All the curtains of the windows had been pulled down; but, at the far end burned candles on a small table, drawn up by the side of a great bed, which did not belong in that room. Near the table stood a tall gray-haired man I had never seen before.

"What means this intrusion?" he demanded, turning his startled face to me.

I answered not, but leaped to the bed, for I had seen a man's form stretched out on its top. In a moment more my arms were about my father, so greatly emaciated and changed that I hardly recognized him. In another moment I had discovered that his feet were shackled with irons to the foot of the bed. A great fury raged through me at the sight, at the thought of it; and, with

a cry of wrath, I dropped my father and turned furiously on the tall man, my sword ready in my hand.

He faced me coolly, confidently, his hand on his sword, evidently thinking me but an impetuous boy and easily killed.

"Release my father instantly, or I run you through with my sword," I demanded.

"I release him only at the King's or Count de Bochart's command, not at a boy's," he said and laughed.

"On guard!" I cried and my sword went into action.

I do not think that the best swordsman in France could have withstood the fury of that sudden onset, so great a rage had the sight of my father in shackles, in his own bed, in his own house, engendered inside of me. Almost the moment my sword touched his I had him at my mercy and, in less than three seconds, I had sent his weapon spinning from his hand.

"Now, release my father this moment," and I held my blade where I could thrust it through his heart on the instant.

His face went white as milk, his eyes went to my eyes, saw death there and, without a word, his hand went to his pocket and drew out a bunch of keys and, with one of them, he unlocked the shackles which bound my father's ankles to the foot of the bed.

"Where is Mignon, my sister?" I asked, turning anxiously to my father, who now sat panting on the bed from the excitements of the past few moments.

"I know not. They have kept her from me for a week or more," and a great anxiety came into the eyes he turned to me. "I——"

At this instant De Pont Brian rushed into the room and with him——

There came a scream of joy, a rush of white across

the floor and my sister's arms were around me and she was laughing and crying and hugging me all at the same time, after the manner of a young girl.

De Pont Brian stood smiling at us through his tears. Yes, tears were actually running down his cheeks; as for that, they were likewise running down my face and it shames me not to write it down.

Now, Mignon caught sight of her father and, with a little shriek of joy, she released me and flung her arms around him, again crying and laughing all at one time.

In the excitements of these fervid minutes, I had forgotten the tall gray-haired man. Now, when I turned to have him secured, he had disappeared, through a window, I think. I never found out who he was, my father did not know him and I never saw him again.

"Now, father," I said, when the fervor of those first exciting minutes began to cool, "I would know how you, a Chevalier of France, came to be shackled to your bed? a prisoner in your own house?"

"It all came from that accursed Count de Bochart and his son!" he said, his happy face at once clouding. "Somehow, my estate has become more and more involved with the passing of each year, until, at about the time of your departure for the New World, I was obliged to borrow a large amount of money and compelled to give the estate as security." His face flushed, as he said this. "At the time I did not know who loaned me the money, the business was all done through an agent; but, within a month, I discovered that the money came from the old Count de Bochart, who had long wished to add my estate to his, and that I had bound myself, without knowing it, to repay the money at the end of one year, which I well knew I could not, or forfeit

the estate. (I know little about business and was shamefully careless in not carefully reading the contract before I signed it.)

"Now, to add to my miseries, the young Count de Bochart, the one you wounded, Yuon, saw Mignon and straightway became enamored of her and insisted on paying court to her, despite her angry rejection of his suit——"

"I hate the big beast!" here interjected Mignon, her face flushing with anger and her eyes sparkling with indignation. "I would not wed him, if he were the last man on earth. Go on father."

I thought her wondrous beautiful as she said this, more beautiful than any girl I had ever seen before, even at the King's court in Paris; and I am sure De Pont Brian agreed with me, from the look I saw in his eyes, which scarcely once left her face.

"It soon became so that Mignon could hardly go outside the door," continued my father, "without having the attentions of the young count forced on her. Then she told me and, after that, whenever she went out I went with her. A few days later, when coming home late at night, with but one attendant, I was set upon by a band of masked men, my attendant killed and I left on the street for dead from a pistol ball. But, fortunately, my own surgeon, returning from a late call, found me and gave me such prompt and effective treatment that my life was saved, albeit I can hardly yet be said to have recovered from the wound.

"Now, not two weeks agone, the old count called on me. He came with an order from the King, commanding me to give my daughter, Mignon, in marriage to his son. I summoned Mignon and had the King's command read in her presence. You know the tantrums she some-

times goes into, when things do not go to her liking. Well, she certainly did fly into one now, the worst I have ever seen her in! She threatened to tear the eyes out of the head of the young count, if he ever dared to come within arms length of her again; and, when the old count called her a devilish little spitfire that needed his son to tame her, she ordered him out of the house and when he laughed at her and made no move to go, she actually caught a broom out of the hand of a servant and belabored him over the head with it, until he was glad enow to flee, spitting out angry threats like an enraged tomcat. Aye, daughter mine?" and he chuckled and smiled, as if the remembrance of that scene gave him great delight.

"I did," replied Mignon, emphatically, and that little, well-remembered laugh of hers, like the tinklings of happy little silver bells, rang out. "And he went, did he not, father mine?" She gave a sly glance from her dancing eyes in the direction of De Pont Brian, whom I had asked to remain with us, doubtless to see if he, too, thought her "a devilish little spitfire." What she saw seemed to satisfy and please her, for she lowered her eyes and flushed and quickly turned to her father. "Go on, father," she said.

"The next day," continued my father, "the young count came with a body of armed retainers and took possession of the house. I still lay almost helpless in my bed, besides, they took us all by surprise, and they had overpowered me before I could get myself out of my bed. The young count ordered me, ill as I was, chained by my ankles to the foot of the bed. He told me that in two weeks my estate would be his, unless I repaid the money I owed his father. He said his father was giving him the estate, as a wedding present, at the happy

culmination of his marriage with my daughter, which would take place on the day the money was due——"

"When is that?" I interrupted anxiously.

"On the third day from this day. Yuon, I do not have the money, can not possibly get the money. Alas, my poor little Mignon!" and a bitter rage came into his face.

I smiled confidently, for well I knew a certain wealthy jeweler in St. Malo would willingly advance me all the money I needed on the Aztec jewels; but I said naught of this to my father. I wished to surprise him, besides I did not have the jewels with me, having left them in the keeping of Goliath, not knowing what might chance on our way to the house.

"Now," and I smiled as I said it, "what happened when he told Mignon of his marriage plans?"

"A plenty!" grinned my father. "The moment she knew that he was in the house, she fled to her room and locked and bolted the door and would not come out, nor would she answer a word to all his words, until he told her his wedding plans. Then, suddenly, she flung the door open and threw a pail of dirty water into his face——"

"And I told him," broke in Mignon, eyes dancing, cheeks flushing, " 'that, sooner than wed him, I would wed death' and I called him 'a big ungainly dirty pig,' and flung myself back into my room, slammed the door in his face and locked and bolted it again. I marry that big dolt! the enemy of my father and brother!" and I thought she was about to give us an example of one of her tantrums, but, a glance in the direction of De Pont Brian, and she suddenly cooled down. "Go on, father," she said demurely.

"There is little more to tell," continued my father.

"Count Robert was now in a mad rage. He stormed and threatened and swore and kicked Mignon's door for a good five minutes, getting no response from her. I could hear him where I lay shackled on my bed, Mignon's room being only across the hall. Then he suddenly summoned the officer in command of the men he had brought with him and bade him guard that door, with his life, night and day, under penalty of death, if he allowed the maid but to stick her pretty nose out of it for an instant, until her wedding day. I also heard him command the officer to guard all the entrances to the house night and day, to admit no one, unless he bore his or his father's written permission, to keep my feet shackled to the foot of the bed, to have a guard stationed in my room night and day, to hold all my servants prisoners and make them serve him and his men. Then with a great oath he swore, loud enow for Mignon to hear, that he would tame that spitting wildcat of a De Valour girl, come their wedding day, and stalked out of the hall. A minute later I heard the clatter of his horse's hoofs on the cobblestones of the court. I have not seen him since."

"Nor will, father. He is dead, slain, as he should be, by the De Valour Sword."

"My son! My son!" exclaimed my father and his hand went out and grasped mine.

"And by your own hand!" and Mignon's arms were about my neck. "O, my brother! You know not how you have gladdened my heart— But, the evil old count still lives!"

"His fangs will soon be drawn," I laughed in my joy at this happy ending of many threatening troubles and perils.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE FINAL RECKONING, IN WHICH ALL ACCOUNTS ARE BALANCED

THERE is little more of my tale to write down, for which I thank the blessed saint. I heard that Count de Bochart, who was old and infirm, was brought to his bed by the loss of his only son and could not himself wreak the vengeance he was continually calling down upon the De Valour family, root and branch, in the delirium of his sickness. Then came the day of the payment; but that worried me not at all; for I had seen that certain St. Malo jeweler. Natheless, it did sorely trouble my father.

"Yuon," he said on the morning of that day, "the old count, in revenge, will drain me to the last drop of blood in my body; will take estate, home, all and drive us, the De Valours, penniless from the home of our ancestors. He has the law and the King back of him. I must bow to it. But," and I saw his body stiffen and straighten, " 'twill be a glorious adventure, Yuon, to fare forth into the world again, you and I, to win, through our own merit, a new home for Mignon and ourselves. Truly, when I come to think on it, I can feel the old thrill of a great adventure in my blood and, were it not for Mignon and you, I would gladly fare forth penniless to tempt fortune once more against the world," and his kindly eyes kindled and his brave lips smiled.

Truly, I believe my gallant father would have gloried in making such a fight—and he would have won! for

there was no such thing as defeat in the brave heart of him!

"Trouble yourself not for me, my father," I replied. "I, too, am a De Valour and will gladly fare forth, with naught but the clothes on my back, to battle with you for that new home for Mignon and ourselves, if there be need." The smile with which I said this caused my father to look curiously at me.

"You be a brave lad," he said, "to be awaiting the coming of the dispossessors with a smile on your face. Aye, a brave lad and a true De Valour. I am proud of you, Yuon," and his own smile greeted mine.

"I, too, am a De Valour," and Mignon's head went up proudly, "I fear not, whatsoever comes, so long as you and Yuon are with me," and she came and sat down on the great arm of the great chair in which my father was now seated and laid one arm softly around his neck, but she did not lower her proud little head.

Then, as we thus sat, came the great moment, fraught with so much meaning to all of us.

First, there were the sounds of the clatter of horses' hoof on the cobblestones of the court below, of the sharp clinking of weapons and of the harnesses of horses, of the rough voices of men, of heavy footsteps in the hall below, on the great stairway— Then the door of the room was rudely thrown open and three men strode boldly in. One I knew as Count de Bochart's principal man of business, a middle-aged, strongly built man, with a cruel mouth and hard, protruding eyes, known to all that country roundabout as Pig-eyed Bigot, as much for his pig nature as for his pig eyes. The other two were, doubtless, his guards, since both were heavily armed. Bigot at once thrust his hand into the bosom of his coat, drew out a legal-looking document and advanced

toward us. He bowed to my father, who was now on his feet, with Mignon standing very erect at one side of him and I at the other.

"I come for certain moneys," he said, "owing Count de Bochart by the Chevalier Lauren de Valour; and, in lieu of their non-payment, I am authorized to take immediate possession of this house and all of value in it and all of the estate of the said Chevalier Lauren de Valour, wheresoever it may be; all being done in accordance with the laws of France and the King, as set forth and authorized in this document I hold in my hand and which I now read to you, together with the credentials setting forth my authority so to act," and he began to unfold the document.

I could wait for no more long-winded talk or reading and took a quick step in front of my father.

"There be no need of your reading that document," I said. "We know you and acknowledge your authority. Likewise we acknowledge the debt and offer you full payment here and now," and I stepped quickly to the table and took out of a drawer, where I had hidden them afore, two bags of gold and set them down on top of the table. "You will find the tally correct; but count the gold and go. Your presence or the presence of any from Count de Bochart is not welcome in this house."

Bigot glared at me, his big pig eyes growing even larger and more protruding, too astonished to speak for the moment.

As for my father and Mignon, it did my heart good to see the glad surprise come into their eyes and the uncomprehending wonder on their faces. But, before I could give them any explanations, Bigot turned to me, a mad rage disfiguring his face. Doubtless he would

have profited greatly had he seized the estate of my father, for the indebtedness did not cover more than one-tenth of its real value.

"Arrest that young crowing cockerel for the murder of Count Robert de Bochart," he thundered, his eyes glowing with triumph. "Aye, you will crow in a different tune, when the hangman's rope be about your neck," and his eyes flamed. "Didst think to escape the penalty for that foul and bloody crime? Arrest him!" His hand pointed to me, but his eyes turned to the two men who had accompanied him.

"Draw sword, the De Valour Sword, and defend yourself, Yuon!" cried my father and I saw his hand go to his own sword, albeit he was so weak that he could scarce stand. " 'Twill be certain death, if they take you hence."

In all that region the De Valour Sword and the De Valour skill were famous and the two men hesitated.

"Arrest him!" roared Bigot. "Be you two men afeared of one sword? The old man is too ill to fight."

"But I be not too ill to aid my brother and my father!" cried Mignon; and the glorious girl caught my father's sword from his hand as he tottered and sank to the floor; and well I knew she would be no mean aid, for my father's skill had long given her training.

Still the two men hesitated and then, even while they hesitated, there came the clatter of furiously galloping hoofs, a loud shout, "De Pont Brian to the rescue!" a rush of flying feet through the hall below, up the stairs —and into the room bounded De Pont Brian, a great fear on his face. One swift glance around cleared his face of all fear; another filled it with great admiration, for now Mignon stood at my side, sword in hand; another and rage leaped into his eyes.

"I hold here the King's full pardon for Yuon de Valour," he said and shook the document wrathfully in Bigot's whitening face. "And here I hold the King's order for the immediate attendance of Count de Bochart on him in Paris, under penalty of his extreme displeasure. Hurrah for Captain Cartier!" and he began a mad dance of joy around the room.

De Pont Brian had ridden to Paris, like a madman, to get me the King's pardon for the killing of the young count; and had brought it back with him, thanks to the high favor with which the King now regarded Captain Cartier. In truth, Captain Cartier's great explorations in the New World had caused a furor of excitement in Paris, where the noblest in France delighted to do him honor.

When we four, my father, Mignon, De Pont Brian and myself, were alone again, I gave my father the parchment we had found with the jewels. He read it aloud, so that Mignon might hear; and their wonder and astoundment grew with every word he read.

"My poor unfortunate brother!" my father said, at the ending of the reading, his eyes wet with tears. "Yet he lived a glorious life of adventure, as he wished; and he died bravely, as a De Valour should. God give rest to his soul!"

We bowed our heads reverently in memory of the dead.

"Now," said my father, a few minutes later, "I would know how this box and the jewels came into your keeping."

Then I related the whole matter; and from that went on to the telling of our adventures and explorations in the New World, until the lateness of the hour compelled our going to our beds.

"Oh, that I had been born a man!" sighed Mignon, as she departed for her room.

But I saw by the looks in the eyes with which De Pont Brian followed her, that he was fervently thanking the blessed saints that she had been born exactly as she was.

As to the remaining Aztec jewels: My father gave one of the most precious to De Pont Brian, it was all he would accept; and Goliath had his choice from all the remaining jewels and an offer of a home with us as long as he lived. The honest fellow refused the jewel, as not befitting his state in life; but accepted the offered home, with tears of relief and joy in his eyes; for he had never had a home of his own since early childhood and it filled him with contentment to know that he now had a safe harborage from all the storms of life. Captain Cartier would accept only one of the minor jewels, "to keep as a memento of that Glorious Adventure and Exploration."

Now, after this sale and division and the loss of the Casket of Quetzalcoatl and the Emerald Pyramid, there still remained enow of the jewels to enable my father, by the sale of only the minor ones, to rebuild and refurnish our ancestral home, in a manner befitting his station in life and to live the remaining years of his life in happy contentment.

Mignon, to her great joy, had her Cloak of Ermine, Paris made; for what I lacked in perfect skins, De Pont Brian and Goliath gave of theirs—and a most proud little lady she was the day she first wore it about her dainty little body.

Here, having happily straightened out all its crooked and tangled threads, I gladly end my tale of that most glorious voyage of Captain Jacques Cartier, which gave

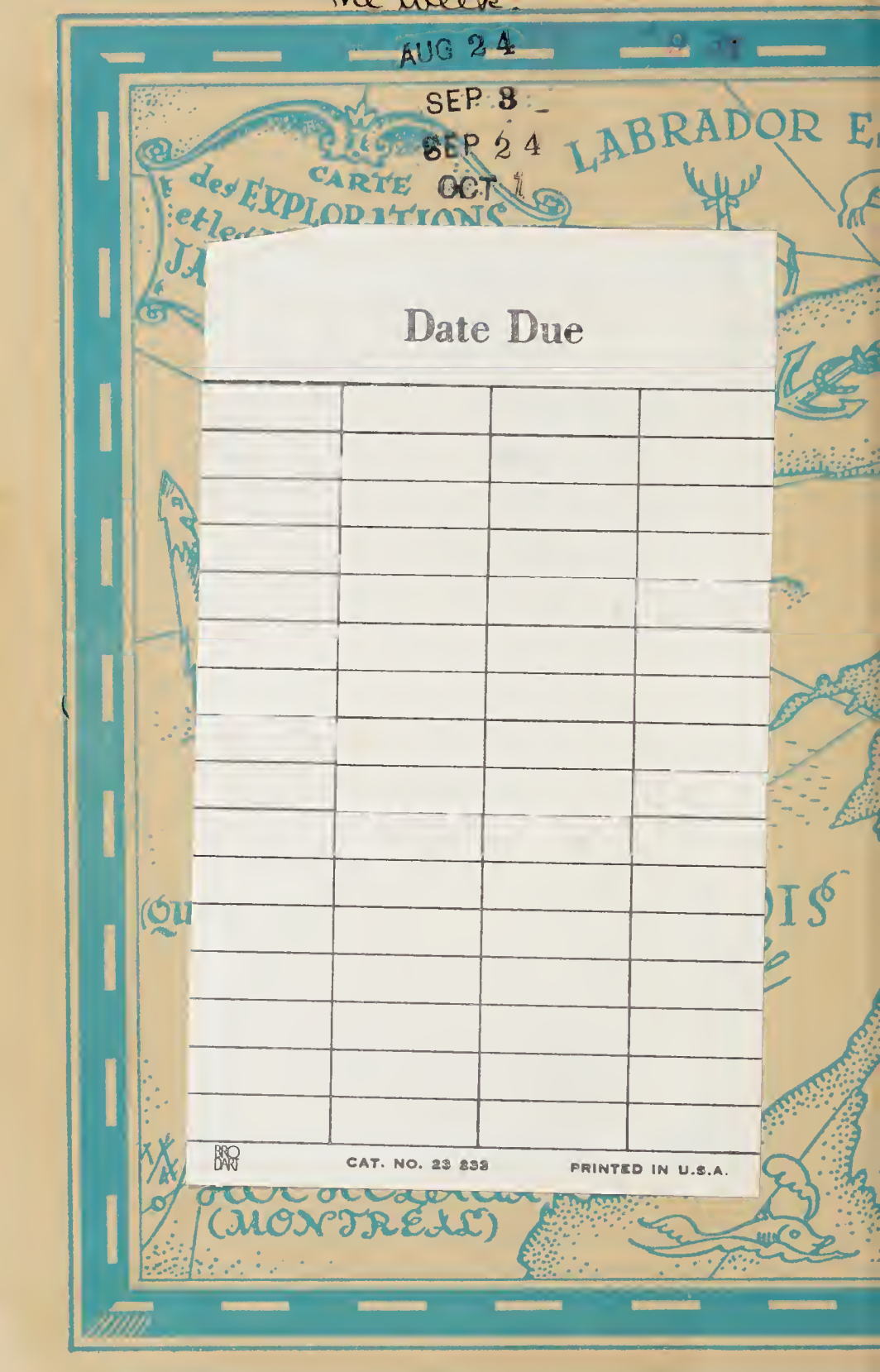
to France a New Empire and to him an ever increasing glory.

THE END

P.S.—Almost did I commit a great sin of omission, by forgetting to chronicle the marriage, within the year, of my sister, Mignon, to De Pont Brian, to the great satisfaction and contentment of both my father and myself. Captain Cartier himself did us the honor of attending the wedding, which was made a festive day in St. Malo; and never before or since have I seen so happy a bride and so enraptured a groom.

May the good saints bless them!

AUG 24
SEP 3
SEP 24
OCT 1



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